Seeing Shakespeare Live: A Study of Secondary School Students' Responses to a Production at Shakespeare's Globe

Thesis

Seeing Shakespeare Live:
A study of secondary school students' responses to a production at Shakespeare's Globe

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Abstract

This thesis explores secondary school students' responses to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB), an education programme at Shakespeare's Globe designed to support the compulsory study of Shakespeare's plays by 11 to 16-year olds in England. Schools are offered free tickets to a contemporary production of a Shakespeare play performed live at Shakespeare's Globe, with workshops for teachers and students and a dedicated website also available to support the in-school study of Shakespeare. This research focuses on the 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing.*

Very little research has explored Shakespeare in the classroom and at the theatre from the perspective of young people. Taking a sociocultural approach to learning, this study foregrounds the students' voices through data generated by qualitative surveys and group interviews in four secondary schools in London which took their whole cohort of Year 9 students to the theatre; consequently it reports the views of approximately 800 young people. Observations of the students during performances and workshops, and interviews with theatre professionals and teachers, offer additional context for the students' comments.

The findings show that before their theatre visit students express a wide range of attitudes towards Shakespeare in spite of sharing very similar experiences of studying Shakespeare in school. They also have pre-conceived ideas of what "Shakespeare" is and how the plays should be performed, and depend on their teachers for explanations of language and plot. The contemporary PSwDB production challenges students' expectations for Shakespeare in performance, and their reflections on their theatre visit show that their experience at Shakespeare's Globe promotes social and cultural development as well as supporting their school learning.

The free ticket offer means that PSwDB encourages inclusivity; the findings strongly suggest that free theatre provides an important and rare social, cultural and educational experience in many students' lives.

Key words: audience, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank, secondary school, Shakespeare, Shakespeare's Globe, students.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AO	Assessment Objective
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ECATG	Every Child A Theatre Goer
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
FSM	Free School Meals
GCE 'A' level	General Certificate of Education 'Advanced' level (at age 18)
GCE 'O' level[1]	General Certificate of Education 'Ordinary' level (at age 16)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education (at age 16)
GEP	Globe Education Practitioner
IoE	Institute of Education
LPN	Learning and Performance Network
MA	Master of Arts
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PSwDB	Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank
RSC	Royal Shakespeare Company
SAT	Standard Attainment Test
SEN	Special Educational Needs
TA	Thematic Analysis
TIE	Theatre in Education
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

[1] GCE 'O' levels were replaced by GCSEs in 1988.

Preface: A Personal Journey with Shakespeare

The play's the thing

Hamlet (2.2.581)[2]

This preface offers an account of my own experiences of Shakespeare. Cresswell suggests, 'We cannot separate what people say from the context in which they say it' (2007, p.40). This is as true for the researcher as it is for the participants in a research project. Cresswell comments:

> How we write is a reflection of our own interpretation based on the cultural, social, gender, class, and personal politics that we bring to research. All writing is "positioned" and within a stance. All researchers shape the writing that emerges, and qualitative researchers need to accept this interpretation and be open about it in their writings (2007, p.179).

My experiences of Shakespeare, in school and with family and friends, have inevitably shaped my own attitude towards his plays, and this attitude has in turn positioned me in relation to the research explored in this thesis. This preface therefore offers the openness that Cresswell desires from researchers, so that my stance is clear from the beginning.

My first experience of Shakespeare, aged 10, was a school trip to see a matinée performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre in London. My prior visits to the theatre had been limited to occasional trips to see a pantomime[3] at Christmas, so this experience of Shakespeare in an outdoor theatre in daylight was completely new. I remember that it was cold, possibly drizzly, and that I did not really understand either why I was there or what I was watching. Some years later, aged 16, I again saw Shakespeare's plays performed live: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford Upon Avon, and *Henry IV Parts I* and *II* at the Old Vic Theatre in London. Suddenly, the plays that I had studied came alive. For me, seeing these plays performed live was 'the thing' that led me to love Shakespeare.

School lessons had done nothing to encourage this love. We studied one Shakespeare play each year in secondary school, sitting at our desks and reading around the class. I do not remember

[2] All quotations from Shakespeare's plays throughout this thesis are from *The Norton Shakespeare* edited by Greenblatt, Cohen, Howard and Eisaman Maus (1997). Text references follow a standardised format of (Act.Scene.Line number).

[3] Pantomime is a form of family theatre involving comedy and audience participation, traditionally based on fairy tales and performed at Christmas (Castelow, n.d.).

worrying too much about pronunciation or understanding the language, but I loved reading fiction and had a wide vocabulary which, on reflection, may have helped me. Once we were taken to the drama studio and asked to create a version of the scene in *Twelfth Night* where Malvolio finds the letter he believes to have come from Olivia, but this was memorable for being unusual. I studied *The Merchant of Venice* for GCE 'O' level, and then *Hamlet* and *Henry IV Part I* for GCE 'A' level, learning copious quotations to support my understanding of the plot and characters but never really considering how the plays were written to be performed.

The school also produced a Shakespeare play every two years, alternating with a musical production in the intervening years. I remember little of these plays, other than that they used attempts at Elizabethan dress and painted scenery to try to create as realistic a sense of place as possible. I was not involved in these productions, and remember only one distinctly, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* performed outside rather than on the school stage and directed by the Headmistress as her finale before retirement. Shakespeare was therefore very much a part of school life, both curricular and non-curricular, and these experiences provided a valuable foundation for my encounters with Shakespeare as an adult.

After a gap of several years, my undergraduate studies in my 30s reintroduced me to Shakespeare through a wide range of his plays. *Antony and Cleopatra* was the subject of a day school at Shakespeare's Globe in London, ending with a performance of the play, which was my first experience of this theatre. The more I studied Shakespeare, the more I loved his work, and seeing it performed in a theatre that was built to be as similar as possible to Shakespeare's original Globe Theatre certainly contributed to that feeling. I developed an emotional connection with Shakespeare's work that I felt for very few other writers.

I continued to seek out performances of Shakespeare's work in my own time, watching a range of productions with friends and family, and also began watching plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries, as these became more commonly performed both by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and at Shakespeare's Globe. I was particularly aware of the unique nature of Shakespeare's Globe during a performance of *Twelfth Night* (2017), when the line 'for the rain it raineth every day' was spoken moments after the rain had stopped falling on the audience, resulting in laughter where none would usually be expected[4].

My teacher training included a visit to Shakespeare's Globe for a tour and a workshop, and I determined to use the theatre as a resource for my students. However, I was aware that in the

[4] In this production, this line from Feste's song at the end of the play (5.1.379) was transposed to earlier in the performance and spoken by Malvolio.

classroom, I was teaching Shakespeare as I had been taught, allocating parts and reading round the class, but lacking the experience or confidence to try a different approach. Through the RSC I then learnt about the Worlds Together conference in September 2012 and the MA in the Advanced Teaching of Shakespeare, a collaboration between the RSC and Warwick University. Learning and practising the theatre techniques taught at the conference and as part of the MA gave me the confidence to use them in lessons, so that students could begin to understand how the meaning of the text is not fixed, but can change in performance. The MA also gave me the opportunity to interview other teachers about their experiences of teaching Shakespeare and to observe their lessons, seeing theory put into practice.

My personal journey with Shakespeare shows that for me, the play was – and is – 'the thing'. The experience of seeing Shakespeare performed live in the theatre has transformed my understanding and enjoyment of his work. It is perhaps inevitable then that I approach this study of students' experiences of Shakespeare, focusing on an education programme that centres on a theatre production at Shakespeare's Globe, from a biased position that values theatre and performance as ways of studying Shakespeare's plays. This bias must be acknowledged, as 'I am always interpreting [other people's] lived experience from my own standpoint' (Schutz, 1972). I cannot set this standpoint aside; by making it explicit from the beginning, however, I hope to consciously mitigate its effects on this research.

1 Introduction

O brave new world
That has such people in't!

The Tempest (5.1.186-187)

1.1 Chapter introduction

The research detailed in this thesis explores students' experiences of Shakespeare in school and at a live performance of *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare's Globe. This chapter provides the context for the research. It considers how Shakespeare is positioned in the English National Curriculum, and how Shakespeare's Globe, supported by Deutsche Bank, aims to help schools to meet the requirements of this curriculum by offering free tickets to performances of a professional production of one of Shakespeare's plays in March each year. This context gives rise to the research questions, responses to which are explored in detail in the main body of this thesis.

1.2 Shakespeare in the English National Curriculum

Shakespeare is the only compulsory writer named in the National Curriculum for English at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with all students in state-funded secondary schools required to study a minimum of three Shakespeare plays between the ages of 11 and 16. One of these plays is then examined for the GCSE English Literature qualification at age 16. The theoretical basis for a national curriculum is explored by others (for example Moore, 2015), as is the privileged position of Shakespeare within the English National Curriculum (see Irish, 2008). This thesis therefore begins by acknowledging that Shakespeare is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum as experienced by the students participating in this research; it does not enter into debates about why Shakespeare is, or whether he should be, compulsory. This section describes what those students are required to study, to give context to their comments explored in later chapters.

The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced the National Curriculum for all state-maintained schools (Great Britain. *Education Reform Act 1988*), for children from the ages of 5 to 16, the ages between which they were then legally obliged to be in full-time schooling. The structure of the English school system is outlined in Appendix I. The curriculum for English was proposed by the Cox Report, to 'make recommendations on attainment targets and programmes of study' for all pupils in England and Wales (Cox, 1989, p.2). This report suggested that students in secondary schools should be exposed to a wide range of literature of all genres and styles and

from all cultures, without any works being 'given a privileged status in the classroom' (Cox, 1989, p.96, para.7.14). However, the proposals then stated:

> 7.16 **Shakespeare**. Many teachers believe that Shakespeare's work conveys universal values, and that his language expresses rich and subtle meanings beyond that of any other English writer. Other teachers point out that evaluations of Shakespeare have varied from one historical period to the next, and they argue that pupils should be encouraged to think critically about his status in the canon. But almost everyone agrees that his work should be represented in a National Curriculum. Shakespeare's plays are so rich that in every age they can produce fresh meanings and even those who deny his universality agree on his cultural importance. (Cox, 1989, p.96)

The contradictory nature of this paragraph and the generalisations it offers about Shakespeare's 'cultural importance' have been included in all subsequent iterations of the National Curriculum, most recently amended in 2013 by the then Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove (Department for Education, 2013b, 2013c), suggesting that Shakespeare is unlikely to be removed from the curriculum in the foreseeable future.

The programmes of study published by the government show in detail what students must cover in their lessons, with Shakespeare included within the requirements for reading rather than speaking and listening. This appears to have resulted in Shakespeare's plays being studied as written texts, rather than as scripts for performance. In Key Stage 3 (ages 11 to 14) students must study two plays (Department for Education, 2013b), and in Key Stage 4 (ages 14 to 16) they must study at least one further play (Department for Education, 2013c). This play is then examined as part of the GCSE English Literature examination and marked according to the assessment objectives that are also set by government (see Table 1). The Key Stage 4 curriculum and associated assessment objectives (AOs) are then translated into GCSE specifications by the four exam boards, with a range of Shakespeare plays offered for examination (see Table 2). The AOs specifically mention 'texts' and make no mention of studying plays through performance, perhaps because they are intended to cover all genres of text. However, AO2 and AO3 could be read as inferring this, since 'meanings and effects' (AO2) come from the text in performance, and 'the contexts in which they were written' (AO3) include the performance context for which play texts were written.

The combination of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the exam board specifications for GCSE examinations provide the framework for the study of Shakespeare's plays in secondary schools in England. In 2018, 537,990 students were registered to sit GCSE English Literature (Ofqual, 2018). For most students, it is a compulsory examination, and the framework for studying Shakespeare is therefore important context for this research.

Table 1: Assessment Objectives for English Literature GCSE (Department for Education, 2013a).

AO1	Read, understand and respond to texts Students should be able to: • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response. • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.	35-40%
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate	40-45%
AO3	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written	15-20%
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation	5%
In each specification as a whole, 20-25% of the marks should require candidates to show the abilities described in AO1, AO2 and AO3 through tasks which require them to make comparisons across texts.		

Table 2: Shakespeare plays offered for examination at GCSE by exam board

	AQA (2019)	Pearson Edexcel (Pearson Education Limited, 2019)	WJEC Eduqas (WJEC CBAC Ltd, 2019)	OCR (2019)
Henry V			√	
Julius Caesar	√			
Macbeth	√	√	√	√
The Merchant of Venice	√	√	√	√
Much Ado About Nothing	√	√	√	√
Othello			√	
Romeo and Juliet	√	√	√	√
The Tempest	√	√		
Twelfth Night		√		

1.3 Globe Education

Globe Education is the education department at Shakespeare's Globe. Its work is broadly divided into three overlapping areas: schools, teachers and students, both primary and secondary; students in higher education and scholars; and the general public (Spottiswoode, 2008). Practical, drama-based 'Lively Action' workshops are offered to schools visiting the theatre (see section 5.2.1), from the belief that 'Shakespeare wrote plays for actors to perform, not for them to read' (Banks, 2008, p.156). This approach is underpinned by a fundamental belief that 'rigorous academic understanding can arise from, and be part of, practical exploration' (Banks, 2008, p.157), suggesting that Globe Education sees a direct link between its drama activities and academic exploration of texts. Banks comments, 'At the heart of Globe Education's work with

young people is the desire that it should be inclusive, accessible to all' (2008, p.158). This has led to the development of on-line materials for teaching and learning that can be accessed internationally (Spottiswoode, 2008), and projects such as Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB), where corporate sponsorship helps to remove financial barriers to participation.

1.4 Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank

PSwDB is Globe Education's 'flagship project for secondary and post-16 Further Education students' (The Shakespeare Globe Trust, 2019b). It is part of Deutsche Bank's corporate social responsibility programme[5] Born to Be. This programme 'uses education-led programmes to unlock the potential of the next generation' in order to address 'the inequality that means some young people enjoy more and better educational opportunities than others' (Deutsche Bank AG, 2019). The sponsorship from Deutsche Bank enables Globe Education to support the compulsory study of Shakespeare in schools without cost to those schools, which fulfils Shakespeare's Globe's own desire to be inclusive and accessible.

PSwDB has run annually since 2007, when it aimed to support the study of a Shakespeare play for the compulsory Shakespeare test taken by all Year 9 students. Year 9 tests were abolished in October 2008. Deutsche Bank agreed to continue supporting the project, and while it is aimed at Key Stage 3 students, its reach has grown to include Key Stages 4 and 5, and students in Birmingham as well as London. The central element of PSwDB is the performance of a Shakespeare play at Shakespeare's Globe. The play is shortened to fit a performance time of 90 minutes with a cast of ten actors; some characters are cut completely, and some actors play more than one role, known as 'doubling'. Tickets to the performances are offered free of charge to state secondary schools in London and, since 2015, Birmingham. The performances are timed to fit into the school day, running from 2pm to 3.30pm with no interval. Each student receives a theatre programme when they arrive at Shakespeare's Globe, and ancillary provision funded by Globe Education includes continuing professional development (CPD) sessions for teachers, in-school workshops for students, a microsite with on-line activities and information about each production, and a series of books offering the texts of some of the plays performed for PSwDB, based on the edited scripts used for productions and available for schools to buy in class sets. Additional performances for schools that do not qualify for free tickets and for families raise revenue that is fed back into the project.

[5] A corporate social responsibility programme is designed to 'manage [a corporation's] relationship with wider society, whether for reasons of commercial viability or to add value to society' (Gawu and Inusa, 2019, p.2). This is seen as a positive way of ensuring the longevity of the corporation because 'it will be in their own interest to undertake either environmental or social initiatives that will preserve the healthy climate in which they operate' (Gawu and Inusa, 2019, p.3).

Table 3 summarises the project up to 2020. The statistics show that in fourteen years, 204,281 students have had the opportunity to see a Shakespeare play performed live at Shakespeare's Globe as a result of the free ticket offer, with paid performances further extending PSwDB's reach. This research focuses on the twelfth season of the project in 2018, which included twelve free schools' performances, including a British Sign Language signed performance; seven performances for schools that did not qualify for free tickets; nine family performances, with tickets available to the general public; two performances reserved for Deutsche Bank staff and their families; and a community performance which was also a relaxed[6] performance.

Table 3: Summary of PSwDB 2007-2020

Year of the project	Calendar Year	Play Choice	Number of Performances	Number of free schools	Number of free students[7]
1	2007	*Much Ado About Nothing*	5	70	6,252
2	2008	*Much Ado About Nothing*	6	100	6,015
3	2009	*Romeo and Juliet*	8	105	9,287
4	2010	*Macbeth*	13	106	14,383
5	2011	*Macbeth*	13	108	14,250
6	2012	*A Midsummer Night's Dream*	13	124	13,106
7	2013	*Romeo and Juliet*	12	128	16,325
8	2014	*The Merchant of Venice*	23	162	18,446
9	2015	*Othello*	23	217	20,200
10	2016	*Twelfth Night*	23	194	18,640
11	2017	*The Taming of the Shrew*	29	201	21,607
12	2018	*Much Ado About Nothing*	31	206	18,283
13	2019	*Romeo and Juliet*	32	193	18,745
14	2020	*Macbeth*	21	97	8,742[8]
		Total number of free students			**204,281**

[6] Shakespeare's Globe defines a relaxed performance as 'intended specifically to be sensitive to and accepting of audience members who may benefit from a more relaxed environment, including (but not limited to) those with autistic spectrum disorders, anyone with sensory and communications disorders or learning disabled people', who may need 'to move or make involuntary noise' (The Shakespeare Globe Trust, 2018).

[7] The figures for free schools and free students include schools in the London Borough of Newham, whose tickets are funded by Newham Borough Council's 'Every Child A Theatre Goer' scheme (see http://www.everychild.com/home/every-child-theatre-goer).

[8] The figures for 2020 show the actual statistics before the theatre closed on 18th March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. There should have been 32 performances, with 166 schools and 19,908 students attending free of charge.

1.5 Research rationale and questions

PSwDB has been evaluated annually. Initially, these evaluations were carried out internally at Shakespeare's Globe, although in years 8, 9 and 10 they were carried out by researchers at University College London Institute of Education (IoE) (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014; 2015; 2016). Some of these unpublished reports have included research with students and teachers, asking for their reactions to the production that they saw and its effects on their attitudes towards studying Shakespeare and their in-school learning (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014; 2015; 2016). However, the method of choosing students to participate in these evaluation studies is unclear, and most of their responses appear to have been generated through the use of scaled questions, rather than allowing students to respond using their own words. Where students' voices have been included, they mostly describe the performance they saw, and teachers' voices were given more prominence, although the researchers acknowledged that 'substantial proportions of students who indicated unsureness about the effect of the project may say something about the limitations of such surveys as measures of impact' (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2015, p.25). In addition, these reports were clearly focused on the core aim of PSwDB which is to support the study of Shakespeare in school, and did not investigate any broader benefits to the students of participating in the theatre visit.

My research seeks to address some of these issues through careful selection of participants and by highlighting students' voices, with their opinions expressed freely in response to open-ended questions. I view PSwDB as a social and cultural experience as well as an educational one, and the exploration here of the students' experiences of PSwDB is not limited to its effect on their in-school learning. While education is often seen as synonymous with schooling, this thesis suggests that it is more generally '*a process of producing change in individuals*' (Goodlad, 1969, quoted in Hobgood, 1970, p.51), and PSwDB can therefore be seen as educational in the word's broadest sense.

My research question is therefore:

How do students respond to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank?

To answer this question, I ask six subsidiary questions:

1. What are students' attitudes towards and experiences of Shakespeare prior to attending the PSwDB production at Shakespeare's Globe?
2. How is the theatre visit framed for, to and by the students who attend?
3. How is the production designed by Shakespeare's Globe to meet the perceived needs of the students who attend?
4. How do students respond to the theatre building and the production during their visit?

5. In what ways do students reflect on, make meaning from and value the PSwDB production after their theatre visit?
6. What benefits do teachers see in PSwDB for their students?

These questions enable the exploration of PSwDB's effect, if any, on students' attitudes towards, and understanding of, Shakespeare and his plays.

1.6 Thesis outline

The preface to this thesis described my own experiences of Shakespeare, acknowledging from the beginning the tensions inherent in this research as I aim to represent fairly the voices of some of the students who participated in PSwDB in 2018. This introduction has then provided the context for PSwDB as an education programme that supports the in-school study of Shakespeare and has given the rationale for this research. The following chapters detail the research itself.

Chapter 2 reviews some of the literature relevant to this research. This includes some consideration of learning theories, of theatre as an environment for learning, and of research into Shakespeare in schools. It also looks at some criticisms of this research, to which I responded in my own research design.

Chapter 3 positions my research within a sociocultural theoretical framework, and presents my research methodology and data generation methods. I explore the ethics of researching with young people and how this may affect honesty in the data. I then explain how the data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the findings from this study. Chapter 4 explores how students perceive Shakespeare before attending the theatre, based on their experiences of his plays in lessons and any out-of-lesson contact with his work through friends and/or family. It also considers what students expect from a performance of a Shakespeare play and how they prepare for their theatre visit.

Chapter 5 follows the project through from its planning stages to the end of the production run. It considers how the 2018 production of *Much Ado About Nothing* was planned, and details my observations of the play in performance and of the students in the audience, to capture in-the-moment responses to the theatre production.

Chapter 6 then explores the students' reflections on their experience of visiting Shakespeare's Globe for this production and considers how they and their teachers perceive the immediate and on-going benefits of the project.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings presented in the previous three chapters. The data suggest that, in the classroom, students do not often develop the skills or confidence to approach Shakespeare independently, with a cycle of dependence created by teaching methods that themselves appear to be driven by examination requirements. The data also show that PSwDB can be a social and cultural critical event as well as a critical event in teaching and learning, and I consider how this affects what "Shakespeare" is for young people.

Chapter 8 concludes this thesis by considering how the research has answered the research questions listed in section 1.5. It proposes ways in which this research can be used to support the teaching and learning of Shakespeare in secondary schools and suggests areas for further research that have not been covered in this study.

2 Literature Review

> And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
> And shining morning face, creeping like snail
> Unwillingly to school
>
> *As You Like It* (2.7.144-6)

2.1 Introduction

The student's perspective is often missing from research into the study of Shakespeare's plays in schools, as that research focuses mostly on teaching and pedagogy. One of the aims of this doctoral study is therefore to explore experiences of Shakespeare in compulsory education from the student's perspective, as context for their visit to Shakespeare's Globe to see a Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) production. Accordingly, this literature review begins by exploring learning theories, also considering how the space in which learning is expected to take place is important. School trips offer different spaces for learning, and research demonstrates how they can offer valuable experiences for students.

Theatre offers a particular type of learning opportunity, and Shakespeare's Globe offers an audience experience unlike any other London theatre. As a result, audiences at Shakespeare's Globe are seen as demonstrably different from audiences in other theatres (Lanier, 2002; Carroll, 2008). Student audiences also appear to behave differently to adult audiences in this theatre (Woods, 2012), with their behaviour seen partly as a result of young people's general lack of theatre literacy (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2013). However, research with student audiences in Shakespeare's Globe is very limited.

Globe Education, the education department at Shakespeare's Globe, is situated here as a Theatre in Education (TIE) provider, and PSwDB as a TIE programme (see section 2.3.4). Globe Education evaluates its various education projects annually, with some evaluations carried out by external agencies, for example the University College London Institute of Education (IoE) evaluations of PSwDB (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014, 2015, 2016). These IoE evaluations include some students' responses to PSwDB and the benefits gained from participating in the project but are for use by Globe Education and Deutsche Bank only. Publicly available research into Globe Education's work is therefore also limited.

In addition, most of the literature which focuses specifically on Shakespeare in schools relates to teachers, teaching and pedagogy, rather than to students and learning. While this literature promotes drama as an approach to teaching Shakespeare, developed particularly from the work

of Rex Gibson (1990; 1998/2016) but also evident earlier, from the early 20th century onwards (Irish, 2008), it usually ignores the learner's voice. It also seems to avoid discussing the dialogic nature of teaching and learning that occurs in practice in the classroom that is highlighted by Howe, Hennessy, Mercer, Vrikki and Wheatley (2019). Where learners' views *are* reported, they are mostly generalised, reflected through the comments of the teachers who observe them (for example in Evans, 2017) rather than being the focus of the research.

This literature review therefore takes a learner-centred approach to studying Shakespeare, based on predominantly qualitative studies of teaching and learning. It explores theories of learning and considers how learning can be affected by different environments, including the theatre. It then applies these theories to studying Shakespeare in schools and demonstrates the need for more research that focuses on the learners themselves.

2.2 Learning theories

Education has been described as 'the transmission of culture from generation to generation' (Kozulin, 2003, p.15); this definition implies teaching rather than learning. However, teaching and learning are dialogic and in relationship with each other; 'teaching does not cause learning: what ends up being learned may or may not be what was taught, or more generally what the institutional organization of instruction intended' (Wenger, 1998, p.267). Wenger's separation of teaching and learning here is key to seeing the learner as a distinct entity within education, one whose identity and motivation as a learner are bound up in their social and cultural contexts. These social and cultural contexts may conflict with the dominant culture of learning in school (Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003), creating tensions between school and non-school identities (Bhatti, 2011).

2.2.1 Sociocultural theories of learning

Within a sociocultural framework, learning is a socially, culturally and historically '*situated*' activity (Bruner, 1996, p.4, emphasis in the original). Lev Vygotsky's work in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s is foundational to this theory, demonstrating that learning begins as a social activity, subsequently becoming internalised by the individual (Vygotsky, 1978), so that 'the true direction of the development of thinking is not from the individual to the social, but from the social to the individual' (Vygotsky, 1986/2012, p.38). Humans are inherently social and are active in and engage with the world through social relationships with each other and with the world itself (Wenger, 1998). Learning must be therefore meaningful for students, 'involving them in actions, discussions, and reflections that make a difference to the communities they value' (Wenger, 1998, p.10), rather than 'generating "performances of understanding" for the sake of showing that you can' (Claxton and Lucas, 2015, pp.49-50).

Learning is a social activity that takes place within the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). The ZPD is:

> *the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.*
>
> (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86, emphasis in the original)

The ZPD is constantly moving, since 'what the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow' (Vygotsky, 1986/2012, p.199). Learning is therefore '*a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them'* (Vygotsky, 1978, p.88, emphasis in the original). However, educational institutions often assume that learning begins with the individual (Wenger, 1998, p.3), and this view is supported by many constructivist researchers (The Open University, 2016).

In sociocultural theory, learning is 'an active process' where 'pupils actively try to construct meaning' (Muijs and Reynolds, 2011, p.79), a 'spontaneous, individualistic […] timeworn, slow and gradual, fits-and-starts kind of process, which […] requires passion, patience, and attention to detail (from the teacher and student)' (Hattie, 2009, p.2). Learning is also 'a pragmatic, time-bound, and situation-bound *choice*', giving the learner the option to refuse to learn (Biesta, 2013, p.70). Wenger also comments, 'because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity […] a process of becoming' (1998, p.215). Gert Biesta calls this focus on learners 'the *learnification* of educational discourse and practice' (2013, p.62, emphasis in the original), but suggests that it is only a partial picture of what happens in the classroom, since 'it is a language of *process*, but not a language of content and purpose. Yet education is never just about learning, but is always about the learning of something for particular purposes' (2013, p.126, emphasis in the original).

Biesta suggests that learning can be either 'monological', where 'truth is learned from the teacher', or 'dialogical', where 'truth is discovered through a collective learning process' (2013, p.72). He refers to monological learning as 'reproductive' and dialogical learning as 'constructive or generative', with the latter being preferable (Biesta, 2013, p.72). Wertsch and Kazak agree: 'in order for instruction to be maximally successful, there must be room for the active construction and negotiation of meaning on the part of the students' (2011, p.165). The students thus are active participants in the creation of knowledge. This can be extended even further into 'the *co-construction* approach to learning [which] puts the focus on the class as a community of learners' (Watkins, 2005, p.21). Learning can then be even more effective: 'in tackling a difficult task as a group, although no member has expertise beyond his or her peers, the group as a whole, by working at the problem together, is able to construct a solution that none could have

achieved alone' (Wells, 1999, p.324). Wells' idea extends the concept of the ZPD to include working with peers who have similar levels of knowledge, leading to learning through the co-construction of knowledge.

Learning is a complex process (Hattie and Yates, 2014), and John Hattie's synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses of research into teaching and learning in the classroom suggests that 'the biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching, and when students become their own teachers' (2009, p.22). However, schooling, which formalises teaching and learning, is itself a cultural practice (Bakhurst, 2007) and sometimes competes or conflicts with the students' cultural practices outside school (Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003). The social, cultural and historical contexts of the learners are therefore very important when considering how students learn.

2.2.2 Environments for learning

The act of learning cannot be separated from the environment in which it takes place: schools have 'their own unique cultures' (Simons, 2009, p.7) and 'every act of teaching and learning is saturated with the specificity of time and place' (Grumet, 1998, p.7). Time and place are key elements in the theory of space (Lefebvre, 1991). Henri Lefebvre suggests that there are three types of space: physical, mental and social, which overlap in a 'perceived-conceived-lived triad' (1991, p.40). These three spaces, physical/perceived, mental/conceived and social lived, are overlapping but inherently hierarchical. Physical/perceived space is the inhabited space that has been created by society for society. This physical/perceived space is shaped by the cultural practices that dominate in the mental/conceived space. The social/lived space is the practice of living in the physical/perceived space shaped by the hegemony of the mental/conceived space. Those who produce physical and social space therefore often do so from a position of power (Lefebvre, 1991).

School buildings are an example of the overlap between physical and social spaces produced by society. Physical space and social space are intimately connected, since 'activity in space is restricted by that space […] space lays down the law because it implies a certain order – and hence also a certain disorder' (Lefebvre, 1991, p.143). School trips therefore offer the opportunity to learn in an alternative physical/perceived and social/lived space to that in which lessons habitually take place. As a result, a school trip can be seen as a 'critical event in teaching and learning' (Woods, 1993, p.2), designed to break up routine lessons where 'learning senses and receptivity becoming dulled' through repetition (Woods, 1993, p.20).

Critical events in teaching and learning are 'integrated and focused programmes of educational activities which […] promote children's education and development in uncommonly accelerated

ways' (Woods, 1993, p.2). This suggests that where a school trip is undertaken and is carefully integrated into the curriculum, it has the potential to have a demonstrably positive effect on learning. It also implies that where a school trip is seen as a stand-alone experience without directly relating to lesson content, it does not meet Woods' criteria for a critical event in teaching and learning, and its effect on learning will therefore be less powerful. However, this ignores the possibility that a school trip may not have any explicit learning goals.

Learning during a school trip may depend on the size of the 'novelty space' for each student (Orion and Hofstein, 1994, p.1116). The novelty space contains three factors that affect the learning that occurs: a student's prior knowledge of the subject matter to be studied; a student's prior knowledge of the trip location and environment; and a student's motivation for learning during the trip (Orion and Hofstein, 1994). The more novel the subject matter, the location or the idea of learning on a school trip, the larger the novelty space and the less likely it is that the student will learn in the ways the trip intends; conversely, the more familiar the subject matter, location or focus on learning are, the smaller the novelty space and the more likely the intended learning is to occur (Orion and Hofstein, 1994). Familiarity with the environment is seen as particularly important in this respect (Jose, Patrick and Moseley, 2017). Using a school trip as a summary of learning at the end of a scheme of work can reduce the potential for learning, as it may seem that there is no new information for the students to access. Some prior knowledge of the subject matter and location of the school trip is therefore advantageous, because it reduces the size of the novelty space, but too much prior knowledge is counter-productive (Orion and Hofstein, 1994). However, the concept of novelty space assumes that school trips have a narrow focus for learning for which a small novelty space is ideal, but this may not always be the case; for many young people, Shakespeare's Globe is likely to be an unfamiliar environment where the novelty space is large.

Motivation to learn can be affected as much by prior experiences of school trips (Lai, 1999) as by the understanding of the purpose of this particular trip, which may be seen by the students more as a social experience than as a learning opportunity (Larsen and Jenssen, 2004). Participation in school trips is often a matter of choice, and the social experience can be *more* important for students than the opportunity to learn; given a free choice of activities, students often propose those of a social nature (Larsen and Jenssen, 2004). School trips are inherently highly social (DeWitt and Hohenstein, 2010), so perhaps this motivation should not be surprising. When a social aim is explicit, it seems inevitable that the trip will be seen by students as a social experience. Other motivations for participation in a trip include the desire to miss lessons (Larsen and Jenssen, 2004), focusing on school as a negative experience rather than the trip itself as a positive one. For many students these findings suggest that learning through

school trips is therefore not the primary aim. However, the social interactions that take place during school trips are also viewed as important for learning: 'the emotional, physical and social interactions that occur during an outdoor experience can promote memories and the acquisition of new knowledge that directly relate back to prior experiences' (Jose, Patrick and Moseley, 2017, p.272).

Research into school trips has historically focused on 'measuring changes in students' performances from the teachers' perspective' rather than on how students make meaning from their experiences outside the classroom (Lai, 1999, p.240). This echoes much of the research into learning inside the classroom that focuses on teachers and teaching rather than learning from the students' perspectives. However, analysis of student talk during school trips shows that affective and cognitive engagement with the experience of a trip supports learning for the students who participate (DeWitt and Hohenstein, 2010). In addition, the findings from post-trip interviews in one study suggest that 'the relative freedom of the field as a learning environment […] has facilitated active and deep learning and changed the social relationship between the participants', in comparison with the data generated during pre-trip interviews (Lai, 1999, p.253). While Lai's research was conducted with a school in Hong Kong, where the culture of education is different from England, it clearly demonstrates that school trips provide opportunities for learning in environments outside the classroom, regardless of the size of the novelty space of the students involved.

2.3 Shakespeare's Globe as a space and place for learning

Theatre trips offer students the opportunity to enter a social space that is unfamiliar to many of them (Coughlan, 2017) and may seem very different to the habitual spaces where formal learning takes place. School trips are critical in introducing students to the theatre, particularly those for whom family culture does not include theatre-going as an activity (Sinclair, 2014), and schemes such as Newham Borough Council's Every Child A Theatre Goer programme (Every Child Achieving Their Potential, 2019) and PSwDB offer important opportunities for young people to experience live theatre.

Theatres offer learning opportunities through engagement with other audience members and with the theatre building itself, as well as through engagement with the performance on stage: 'attending a performance is a social event, resulting not just in an awareness of others, but also in an awareness of the personal responses of others' (Reason, 2004, p.16). Learning about the play therefore comes through the experience of being in the audience but also partly as a result of, either through agreement or disagreement with, the responses of others in that same audience. This learning is then developed through reflection with others after the theatre event

(Sinclair, Adams and O'Toole, 2014). In addition, theatre visits offer the opportunity to learn about theatre: how it works, production skills, and knowledge of expected behaviour in the building, as well as knowledge of the play in performance (Fleming, Ewing and Hughes, 2014). Furthermore, the theatre itself is 'a fixed prop' which, 'by its locational, visual and aural presence […] prescribed the imaginative world of Shakespeare himself' (Stern, 2013, p.32). This suggests that the theatre building was an integral part of Shakespeare's plays when he wrote them, and, I would argue, Shakespeare's Globe continues to function in this way today.

2.3.1 Studying Shakespeare through theatre

Theatre visits are seen as particularly important for students studying a Shakespeare play:

> The importance of live theatre visits cannot be overstressed. There exists a huge amount of evidence testifying to how a live Shakespeare performance can vividly enhance students' motivation and understanding, enriching the quality of their responses in many ways. Preparation for, and follow-up of, such visits, helps deepen pupils' experience, especially when they are part of a coordinated Shakespeare programme, rather than isolated "one-offs" (Gibson, 1990, p.4).

Rex Gibson's view pre-empts Woods' idea of critical events, but emphasises that theatre visits are most valuable as learning experiences when they are part of a programme of study. Furthermore, the theatre visit is the 'vital preliminary' for any study of Shakespeare's plays, because 'seeing the play on stage is the best way to discover the shape of the story and to get a sense of its pace' (Gurr, 1988, pp.2-3). Gibson's words also emphasise the liveness of theatre as important for supporting and extending students' understanding of Shakespeare's plays.

'Liveness' has historically been inadequately defined: often contrasted with film, the liveness of theatre 'is often presented as central to its definition, frequently as an unreflective assumption' (Reason, 2004, p.2). In live theatre, 'audiences [feel] invited into a close, social relationship with the performers' (Barker, 2003, p.25). Liveness is thus about the experience of the audience rather than the actors, a combination of 'the proximity of the actors, the sense of immediacy, the possibility of something going wrong, awareness of other audience members, a sense that other people are having a different experience with a different perspective, the sense that it is a one-off event never to be repeated and a feeling of community with other audience members' (Reason, 2004, p.18). One of Matthew Reason's research participants compared that audience experience with film where 'if everyone stood up and went out it would carry on' (Reason, 2004, p.19). It is often this comparison that is used to promote theatre as the more culturally valuable form of entertainment (Barker, 2003), whereas 'in a cinema, the audience's experience is essentially a passive one […] there is nothing creative about the experience' (Edwards, 2001). This idea of creativity suggests that audiences collaborate in meaning-making with the

performers and with the other audience members, rather than merely observing events on-stage: 'a conscious, live performance that includes the immediate interaction between audience and artists' (Bedard, 1992). The audience is therefore essential to theatre, and it is this that the term 'liveness' is trying to convey.

Whatever the play, theatre can have a profound effect on students because it often explores themes that are relevant to young people live but at the same time 'in the safe zone of "the world of the play"' (Swartz, 2003, p.204). These themes are presented in hypothetical situations, for example offering 'a paradigm for engaging urban youth in explorations of power, agency and the distribution of economic and cultural capital' (Neelands and Nelson, 2013, p.27). This clearly has an explicit social value even though it may not relate directly to the curriculum, and the collaborative meaning-making that is a key part of the audience experience of live theatre results in students entering into those hypothetical situations alongside the performers and rendering them 'educational'. Tony Jackson, a TIE practitioner, states:

> any good theatre will of itself be educational – that is, when it initiates or extends a questioning process in its audience, when it makes us look afresh at the world, its institutions and conventions and at our own place in the world, when it expands our notion of who we are, of the thoughts and feelings of which we are capable, and of our connection with the lives of others. (Jackson, 1993, p.35)

'Educational' in this context seems to imply provoking the audience to question their social and cultural beliefs and behaviours by seeing society from a different perspective, rather than focusing closely on knowledge of texts. Jackson, as a TIE practitioner, clearly has a vested interest in promoting theatre for young people, but his views echo those of Swartz and Neelands and Nelson.

Theatre performances are 'socially made and shared as lived experience' (Swartz, 2003, p.204). The idea of theatre as a collaborative enterprise suggests that a school theatre visit offers an important learning experience, since learning itself is a social and collaborative activity. In the short term, learning from theatre that relates to the curriculum can be seen in the classroom directly afterwards. However, as with learning in the classroom, what is learnt by students in the theatre may not be what the teachers or indeed the theatre company intended them to learn (see section 2.2). In addition, the student may continue to make meaning from the performance they saw, and their learning can therefore be said to continue indefinitely: 'six months or six years hence, a participant may need to match up real-life experience with the fictional experience of the play – for that person the theatre event is still not complete, it remains an imperfect experience' (Williams, 1993, p.102). Meaning is made not in the moment of the experience but through later reflection (Schutz, 1972), and those reflections may therefore

continue indefinitely through memories of the school trip. They may also affect future practice, both one's own and that of others through inclusion in theatre visits: '*childhood experiences* of live performance not only induct young people into theatre, but influence continuing attendance' (O'Toole, 2014, p.9, emphasis in the original). This suggests that one theatre visit can lead to further theatre visits, with continued and ever-increasing learning taking place as a result of that first trip.

2.3.2 Student audiences

There has been little research into student or child theatre audiences (Freshwater, 2009). As part of research into audiences at Shakespeare's Globe, a student audience at a PSwDB production has been observed, but this research was limited by ethical constraints that prevented the researcher speaking directly with the students (Woods, 2012). The TheatreSpace project in Australia (see below) explored young people's theatre-going practices (O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton and Ewing, 2014), but most research focuses on adult audiences of individuals or small groups of theatre-goers, not on young people or large groups of learners attending together.

The audience is essential to theatre, since without an audience there can be no performance (Freshwater, 2009). In particular, the theatre space at Shakespeare's Globe offers a 'specific experience of Shakespearian spectatorship' (Lanier, 2002, p.163). The architecture of the theatre enables the audience to engage in 'collective participation with the performance, each other, and the space in the present moment' (Lanier, 2002, p.166). This collective participation is seen as resulting particularly from the absence of a roof, which has two key effects: the audiences and actors are in the same light, and there is always an element of unpredictability where elements such as the weather, wildlife and aeroplanes can affect moments in the play (Carroll, 2008). As a result of these two effects, the audience can also become unpredictable: 'an actor cannot go out onto that stage and give a soliloquy without speaking directly to the audience', which invites the possibility of the audience answering back (Carroll, 2008, p.40). The audience members thus become 'not passive recipients' but 'the most versatile scene partner in the world' (Carroll, 2008, p.40). Tim Carroll's comments seem to compare audiences at Shakespeare's Globe with audiences in darkened auditoria, ignoring other forms of interactive or open-air theatre such as Theatre in Education (TIE) productions (see section 2.3.4) and my own visit to Regent's Park Open Air Theatre (see preface) respectively.

Shakespeare's Globe offers audiences the opportunity to learn about the architecture and social spaces of Elizabethan theatre through its 'performance of authenticity' (Pye, 2014, p.411). This suggests that the theatre itself is part of the performance that the audience comes to see, as

visitors enter a 'simulated stimulated-learning milieu' (Pye, 2014, p.425), even if there is no performance on-stage. For students required to understand the contexts of production of the text that they study (see section 1.2), this opportunity for learning is an important part of their theatre visit. Consequently, 'the performance and reception conditions at the Globe Theatre have formative effects, shaping and determining the social dynamics of the audience […] and necessitating a kind of physicalised audience engagement not required in other theatres' (Woods, 2012, p.16). As a result, 'both the event and the architecture surrounding the event share in the construction of its meaning' (Fantasia, 2004, p. 156). The movement here from audience *engagement* in the theatre event to the audience *making meaning* from that theatre event suggests that it is possible for learning to occur as a result of being in the audience in that space.

Mark Rylance, Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe from 1995 to 2005, comments:

> in the Globe the audience is being played upon by each other as well, and one often had the feeling as a player that the consciousness of the audience as a whole was larger than the consciousness of any individual audience member or actor. This is where the Globe's spirit as a building comes into play. The sacred geometry of the architecture generates a particular collective spirit in the people gathered. The group consciousness was very surprising; it would teach you things that were funny, and things that were moving in the play that you never imagined to be so. Then you had the choice as an actor and director whether to suppress a response or employ the response (such as laughter at an unexpected moment). (Rylance, 2008, p.109)

This 'unexpected moment' is part of the 'liveness' of the performance, making each audience's experience unique and altering the play each time.

The idea of a 'group consciousness' is supported by the theory of emotional contagion, where one person's responses are perceived by and then imitated by those who are around them (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994). Often this is 'automatic, unintentional [and] uncontrollable' (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994, p.5), suggesting that individuals may not know why they are mirroring the behaviour of others, and may not even realise that they are. Key to this idea is that the individuals must be able to see each other, since 'facial feedback' is one of three important elements that influence emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994, p.52). The other two elements are vocal and postural feedback: 'it doesn't take much in people's expressions, voices or actions for others to pick up on what they are feeling' (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994, p.129), resulting in the creation of a 'collective mind' (Le Bon, 1896, p.2).

However, in contrast with seeing the audience as a collective is the idea that 'there can be several distinct, co-existing audiences to be found among the people gathered together to watch a show and that each individual within this group may choose to adopt a range of viewing positions' (Freshwater, 2009, pp. 9-10). Whole audiences contain smaller, distinct groups, and even within those groups there are individuals who may change their perspective during a performance: 'a single person can experience multiple responses to a show which may well be at odds with one another' (Freshwater, 2009, p.6). Audiences must therefore be spoken of 'in the plural […] in contrast to the mythology of the communal, collective and singular audience that often exists within public discourses' (Reason, 2004, p.17).

The idea of a variety of responses across an audience supports the underlying principle that audience reactions in this particular theatre space are unpredictable, since the weather, wildlife, aeroplanes and shared light all influence how individuals and groups within the space will respond. However, although the audience is unpredictable, its behaviour is 'not wholly natural or spontaneous', since it has 'quickly become conventionalized' (Lanier, 2002, p.163). This suggests that although audience behaviour may be perceived to be different from that in other theatres, particularly those with a darkened auditorium, there are still rules of behaviour which are understood and followed by audience members. The development of a regular '"Globe" audience' that 'is able to store and build upon its experiences in the space' (Van Kampen, 2008, p.88) also suggests that patterns of behaviour amongst audience members can develop, countering Carroll's expectations of audience unpredictability discussed above. However, the lack of research with student audiences, many of whom may be unfamiliar with theatre conventions, suggests that the rules of theatre behaviour may not be more generally known.

Understanding how to behave in a theatre is a key part of what has been termed 'Theatre Literacy' (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2013, p.145). Kirsty Sedgman suggests that expectations of correct behaviour in the theatre are rooted in the work of Matthew Arnold in the mid-nineteenth century: 'through encouraging a more mannerly mode of viewing, the Arnoldian campaigns intended to produce the atmosphere of quiet contemplation deemed necessary for great art' (2018, p.28). Efforts to control behaviour and the introduction of fully darkened auditoria served to suppress the previously demonstrative and even riotous behaviour of theatre audiences, leading to the calm, quiet audiences still mostly evident in early 21st century theatres, who observe rather than participate in theatre performances (Sedgman, 2018). Shakespeare's Globe, however, through its design and use of shared light, permits audience members to return to more pre-Arnoldian behaviours, although always tempered by the conventions that have developed for this space since it opened (Lanier, 2002).

Students' behaviour in the audience at PSwDB productions is seen by the adults that observe them as 'markedly different to the responses of the main season audiences' (Woods, 2012, p.47). This is possibly because young people lack the conventional theatre literacy described by Sedgman (2018); one example of this is that students keep up a commentary throughout the play, although observations suggest that this is 'not a sign of inattention but in fact directly inspired by and engaged with the performance' (Woods, 2012, p.47). As with much other research referenced in this chapter, the students' behaviour is here being seen from an adult perspective rather than explored from their own points of view. The TheatreSpace study into young people's theatre-going practices in Australia (O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton and Ewing, 2014) is therefore important in beginning to understand their attitudes and behaviours as audience members.

The TheatreSpace study was a large-scale project over five years, from 2008 to 2012, with 3000 survey participants and 800 interviewees, 150 of whom made contributions over a period of two years, adding a longitudinal element to the research; 70 schools and 100 teachers and theatre professionals were involved (O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton and Ewing, 2014). The size of this project in terms of both the number of participants and the length of time over which it was carried out make it very important in a sparsely occupied field. The project found that 'young theatre-goers are attracted to the *liveness and immediacy* of theatre, given a proper opportunity' (O'Toole, 2014, p.9, emphasis in the original). The concept of liveness has been discussed above. However, key to this finding is that young people need to be presented with the opportunity to attend theatre productions, since without school trips, many would not have considered theatre as an activity, or if they had, would not have known how to gain access (Sinclair, 2014).

Repeated attendance at the theatre is one of three important elements required for developing theatre literacy, the others being theatre-making and the study of theatre (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2014). The TheatreSpace project found that theatre literate students showed impressive cognitive gains over their peers who were not theatre-goers:

> Theatre literate young people demonstrate the use of technical and meta-language, and the language of experience and pleasure. They are able to respond critically to a play, deconstructing both the text and the performance in depth, using learned conceptual frameworks and the formal curriculum language of theatre studies.
>
> (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2014, p.155)

This evidence of students learning through the experience of theatre demonstrates how important school visits to the theatre can be in developing critical thinking and meta-theatrical knowledge, skills which could have a positive effect in other contexts. It also offers important

insights into the under-researched area of young theatre audiences and theatre for young people.

2.3.3 Research into Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank

Globe Education has been an integral part of Shakespeare's Globe since Sam Wanamaker originally developed his plans for a Shakespearean theatre in Southwark (Spottiswoode, 2008). However, Farah Karim-Cooper comments that 'the work of Globe Education [is] often neglected by scholarly discourse on the Globe' (2008, p.129), implying that education activities at Shakespeare's Globe have not been a focus for academic research. While individual project evaluations do take place, such as those of PSwDB by the IoE (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014, 2015, 2016), the findings of these evaluations are generally not published and therefore do not contribute to wider discussions concerned with young people's experiences of Shakespeare.

The annual evaluation reports on PSwDB offer important insights into the value of projects run by Globe Education. However, their scope is limited, and the methods used to arrive at their conclusions have not always been made explicit, particularly regarding the numbers of student participants involved and how they were chosen. In particular, the evaluations do not contain detailed observations of the students during their theatre visits, focusing mainly on subsequent reflections and evaluations of the project. These limitations mean that it is impossible to identify bias in the responses, leaving readers to trust that the academics involved have been rigorous and fair in their data generation and reporting. In addition, the research does not appear to have been carried out consistently from year to year, with some quantitative data such as 'Students' attitudes to Shakespeare before participating in the project' (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2015, p.24) and 'Students' assessment of what they have gained from the project' (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2015, p.25), generated through scaled questions and presented as graphs, missing from the 2016 report produced by the same researchers. However, the addition of qualitative data in the form of quotations from some students adds depth to the evaluations, and the inclusion of a list of recommendations for improvements to PSwDB at the end of each of the three IoE reports shows that the researchers have attempted to create a balanced view of the project.

The aims of PSwDB are stated in a quotation from Fiona Banks, then Head of Learning and Teaching Practice at Globe Education, in the first evaluation report: for students '"to experience Shakespeare in performance and to have a positive theatrical experience"' (Shakespeare's Globe, 2007, p.2). However, the report focuses on implementation of the project rather than on results, and, as with other research (see section 2.4), relies on observations of the students made by teachers and other adults in the audience to consider its effect on them (Shakespeare's Globe, 2007). By the sixth year of the project, students' views were being reported directly,

although these were mostly generated through quantitative methods (Ellinas, 2012). The 2012 report finds that, based on the students' responses, 'the visit to the Globe has changed the attitude of the vast majority of pupils about going to the theatre and encouraged them to become active theatre goers' (Ellinas, 2012, p.4). This supports the findings of the TheatreSpace project discussed above that once young people experience theatre, even where it is not part of their family culture, it becomes an attractive choice for them as an activity.

The IoE reports focus more on how PSwDB supports the in-school study of Shakespeare (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014, 2015, 2016). They include statistics to show students' responses to statements such as 'I understand the play better', on a scale from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree', with 51% of students choosing 'Agree' and 24% choosing 'Strongly agree' for this particular question; only 5% chose 'Strongly disagree' and 7% chose 'Disagree' with the remaining saying they were 'Not sure' (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2015, p.25). These statistics demonstrate a move from a focus on implementation to a desire to understand how the students themselves respond to the project and offer insights into learning through theatre which are rarely found elsewhere. They also demonstrate a direct link between the PSwDB theatre experience and improved attitudes and understanding in the Shakespeare classroom for many of the students who take part in the theatre visit.

2.3.4 Theatre in Education

A theatre programme or performance used as a critical event in teaching and learning, either at the theatre itself or in school, is known as a Theatre in Education (TIE) programme. TIE was a term coined in England in the mid twentieth century for projects where theatre companies perform to school audiences, either in the school or in another venue (Vine, 2006). There is no agreement on a definition of TIE, although it usually involves 'the careful planning of an integrated learning process using theatrical form' (Wooster, 2007: 47). TIE is seen as different from other forms of theatre for children and young people, in that it has the explicit educational purpose of teaching about something other than theatre itself (Wooster, 2007). Since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1989, TIE has most commonly linked the theatre experience with lesson content, through a performance that is enhanced by workshops with the students who participate; these workshops are led by actor-teachers whose role in TIE combines both theatrical performance and teaching (Bolton, 1993). However, TIE appears to have no fixed format.

Shakespeare's plays have been brought into schools by TIE projects such as *Prospero's Island* by Punchdrunk Enrichment, based on *The Tempest* (Cremin, Swann, Colvert and Oliver, 2016), and *Romeo and Juliet* by the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Yorkshire (Bell, 2018). These productions

focused on exploring the text through immersive and new ways as well as sometimes drawing out broader themes that might relate to contemporary society. They demonstrate that TIE can be about exploring text as well as about exploring social and moral issues. From this perspective PSwDB can be seen as a TIE project, since it offers an experience of theatrical performance that is intended to help school students understand a Shakespeare play, supported by workshops and on-line materials where these are deemed useful for the students by their teachers. The annual evaluations of PSwDB discussed above demonstrate that it has a positive effect on many of the students who take part.

2.3.5 Criticism of the use of performance to study Shakespeare

There are two key criticisms of the use of performance to study Shakespeare's plays: the general idea that seeing a play performed is an essential part of its study, and the more specific idea that one performed version offers a definitive version of any play.

A polarisation of teaching methods has seen Shakespeare's plays *either* as texts to be read *or* as scripts to be performed, whereas teachers 'daily manage the complex oscillation between the literary works, the performed plays, and a discursive activity that seeks to translate both objects and events into meaning' (McLuskie, 2009, p.125). Kate McLuskie comments:

> In educational circles, the idea that Shakespeare "wrote for performance" has supported the view that the experience of Shakespeare in performance is critical to the appreciation of his plays and that that experience will in and of itself produce educational value. (McLuskie, 2009, p.125)

The idea that Shakespeare wrote for performance is countered by evidence that during Shakespeare's lifetime, the printing and sometimes reprinting of play scripts shows that 'there was indeed already an eager readership for Shakespeare's plays' (Palfrey, 2011, p.11). In addition, the assumption that the experience of Shakespeare in performance can be separated from other experiences of Shakespeare ignores how prior experiences and the social and cultural contexts of the current experience all contribute to meaning-making. McLuskie is therefore keen to highlight that theatre is *one* way of approaching Shakespeare, not *the* way, and should be part of a range of methods of teaching and learning rather than set against textual study.

An individual production of a Shakespeare play, seen either as film or as a theatre performance, can also be misperceived as 'a definitive interpretation of the text' (see section 2.4.3): 'what students need to understand more than anything, is that Shakespeare is not a fixed experience but something open to permutation and experimentation' (Francis, 2003, p.86). This is as true of any reading of the text as it is of any performance. Joseph Francis suggests that habitual theatre-going is deemed necessary before any one version is seen as 'provisional and

exploratory' (2003, pp. 83-84). However, habitual theatre-going is unlikely to be part of many young people's lives; more pragmatically, teachers need to make explicit for their students the idea that any reading or performance is interpretative rather than the definitive version (Rokison, 2013). The numerous filmed versions of many of the plays make this a straightforward task.

These views contribute to the on-going debate about the value of performance to studies of Shakespeare's plays, which sets the use of film and theatre against the close reading of the text. Research into teaching Shakespeare is discussed below, in section 2.4; it suggests that in practice a range of approaches to teaching and learning of the plays is used, according to the needs of the students and the curriculum. Jonathan Bate, in an interview with Joe Winston, clearly emphasises this: 'the danger for *Stand Up For Shakespeare*[9] is if it substitutes for sit down with Shakespeare and read him. You've got to have both' (Winston, 2015, p.115). What performed versions of the plays can do, used appropriately, is demonstrate the interpretative nature of theatre. Students are then more likely to engage with the complexities and uncertainties of each play, and to understand that there is no one definitive version.

2.4 Studying Shakespeare in School

Most of the literature concerned with Shakespeare in the secondary school classroom is dominated by a focus on teaching rather than learning, with books such as those by Rex Gibson (1998/2016), James Stredder (2009) and Fiona Banks (2013) encouraging teachers to extend the range of activities they use in the classroom when teaching Shakespeare, particularly through the use of drama approaches. Very little research into the secondary curriculum in England has valued asking the students for their opinions on and experiences of what they are asked to study. However, 'it cannot tenably be claimed that schooling is primarily intended to benefit pupils if pupils' own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to' (McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck, 2005, p.150). Research into what is and is not helpful for learning in three secondary schools found that pupils 'talked constructively about what did, did not and could help their learning' (McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck, 2005, p.152), although, in spite of these pupils offering effective ideas to improve their classroom learning, with which their teachers agreed in principle, those teachers 'did not in practice find it realistic to do that and also to meet official requirements' (McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck, 2005, p.162). In addition, 'almost all studies involving primary and secondary school pupils focus exclusively on teachers' personal qualities and teaching methods and ignore other aspects of the school

[9] *Stand Up For Shakespeare* was a Royal Shakespeare Company initiative launched in 2008 which encouraged schools to ensure that students should 'Do it, see it, start it earlier' (O'Hanlon, 2008, p.10).

environment' (Hennessy, 1999, p.154), demonstrating that there is room for a much broader range of research about the school experience and involving young people than has previously been carried out.

Research into students' experiences of studying Shakespeare is similarly rare. A British Council survey found that globally, two thirds of countries have Shakespeare on their curriculum, with half of all children studying his work (Donaldson, 2016). According to the survey, in the UK this figure jumps to 70%, although only 44% of students have seen a Shakespeare play performed in a theatre, and over a third do not like Shakespeare, do not understand his work and do not find him relevant to their lives (Donaldson, 2016). The survey does not offer explanations for these responses and they are therefore decontextualised, making them difficult to compare to other research into Shakespeare in the classroom.

Where students' views are represented in research into studying Shakespeare, they are often generalised and are usually filtered through the observations of their teachers (for example, Evans, 2017). That students find Shakespeare boring and difficult is presented as axiomatic (Gibson, 1986; Wright, 2005), but the assumptions inherent in this view are rarely questioned, nor does the evidence to support them appear to be more than anecdotal. The first attempt to discover what students really think about studying Shakespeare was in the "Shakespeare and Schools" project in the 1980s. Despite the intentions of this project, direct reporting of the students' views was rare in the journal that was subsequently published, which was dominated by teachers' reports of using drama techniques to teach Shakespeare. Subsequent research into the Shakespeare classroom has continued to focus predominantly on teachers and teaching; occasionally case study research by a teacher in their own classroom has also included the views of students (for example Wood, 2017).

2.4.1 Rex Gibson and the "Shakespeare and Schools" project

The "Shakespeare and Schools" project in the 1980s (Gibson, 1986) has been foundational to all subsequent research into the teaching and learning of Shakespeare. The aim of the project was 'to improve the quality of pupils' encounters with Shakespeare in all educational settings' (Gibson, 1986, p.4). Written before the introduction of the National Curriculum and compulsory Shakespeare in 1989, Gibson suggested that

> all too often, pupils describe their school experience of Shakespeare as "boring", "difficult", "irrelevant". Many adults look back on their school encounters with Shakespeare as dull and off-putting. Some teachers find Shakespeare "too difficult" for their pupils, and lack the motivation or confidence to explore the possibilities of his work. (Gibson, 1986, p.4).

The generalised opinions expressed here contain the inherent assumption that Shakespeare is worth studying if the barriers of boredom and difficulty can be overcome. Importantly, what the project wanted to do was to focus on students' views, which appears not to have been done before:

> Although we possess a small number of useful accounts of teaching Shakespeare […], we lack detailed knowledge of the growth of pupils' understandings, attitudes and imaginative responses. We do not know in local, minute-to-minute encounters, how pupils work on Shakespeare or how Shakespeare works on pupils. The "literature" on Shakespeare provides us with little in any detailed way of pupils' (or even teachers') knowledge of, attitudes towards, and responses to Shakespeare. It tells us even less about the growth and development of that knowledge, those attitudes and responses. (Gibson, 1986, p.4, emphasis in the original).

The findings from the project and subsequent examples of the use of Gibson's approach to teaching Shakespeare were published in the *Shakespeare and Schools* magazine which ran for 24 editions, one each term from Autumn 1986 to Summer 1994. A final report to the Leverhulme Trust was in preparation (Gibson, 1988) but I can find no evidence of it or that it was actually submitted. Findings from the project were published in some detail in the Autumn 1989 edition of *Shakespeare in Schools*, including some comments from students:

> The major Project finding is that, through appropriate pedagogy, pupil attitudes to Shakespeare can be improved, enjoyment and understanding increased, and more imaginative, more genuinely personal responses evoked. There is strong evidence of increased motivation, of pupils seeing relevance, coherence and meaning, when they encounter Shakespeare through appropriate methods. Here, pupils report feeling that they have greater personal ownership of the plays and the language. They feel more involved across a wider range of their capacities, not merely the intellectual. And they report that they learn more. (Gibson, 1989, p.2).

How the data reported here was generated is unclear, but the focus of the project was on using 'active approaches' to improve students' engagement with and enjoyment of Shakespeare's plays, 'at the heart of which are social, collaborative, imaginative, *re-creative* activities' (Gibson, 1990, p.1, emphasis in the original). Gibson states, 'Again and again students report that their understanding of Shakespeare has increased because of the participatory, social, exploratory methods used' (1989, p.3). Teachers' views were also gathered, and Gibson moved on to publish books explaining how to use active approaches in the classroom (1990, 1998/2016).

A later survey asked teachers about Shakespeare's inclusion in the National Curriculum. The findings demonstrated a dramatic shift in the teaching of Shakespeare as a result of the National

Curriculum's introduction. The Shakespeare and Schools project found that 'Shakespeare conventionally begins in the fourth year [Year 10], but even here a substantial proportion of pupils still do not encounter Shakespeare as part of their curriculum experience', and 'The "School Shakespeare canon" is narrow. *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* dominate' (Gibson, 1989, p.4). However, the subsequent survey of over 600 teachers found that '88% welcome the inclusion of Shakespeare in the National Curriculum', and that *all* Shakespeare's plays had been taught in the previous two years (Gibson, 1992, p.16).

Gibson's work has been followed by other proponents of active approaches to teaching Shakespeare, such as Stredder (2009) and Banks (2013), but has not been without its critics. An active approach to teaching Shakespeare has been labelled 'Shakespeare by overkill' in its supposed attempt to 'make Shakespeare not only our contemporary, but all things to all men (and women)' (Blocksidge, 2003, p.15). This is perhaps an oblique reference to the debates over whether Shakespeare should be taught as theatre or as text for analysis (see section 2.3.5). In practice, research shows that teachers use a range of activities in the classroom (Yandell, 1997), often including some of Gibson's methods, demonstrating how influential the Shakespeare and Schools project has been for school Shakespeare, although ultimately at GCSE students are required to write in response to text not to performance (see section 1.2).

2.4.2 Shakespeare in the classroom

Research into Shakespeare in the curriculum since the Shakespeare and Schools project has focused predominantly on what is taught in the classroom (for example Elliott, 2017; Elliott and Olive, 2019), and on the experiences of teachers (for example Batho, 1998; Coles, 2009; Evans, 2017), rather than on exploring student perspectives on studying Shakespeare. Victoria Elliott and Sarah Olive's recent survey of secondary English teachers found that '*Macbeth* accounts for 22% of all Shakespeare play teaching in the UK […] with *Romeo and Juliet* providing a further 18%'; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* accounts for 10% of teaching, making the total for just these three plays coming to 50% of all teaching (2019, p.6). These statistics, albeit from a relatively small number of teachers who volunteered to participate in the survey, suggest that students nationally have similar experiences of a narrow range of Shakespeare's plays. Some teachers have their texts chosen for them by their senior leadership team, while others are limited in choice by the copies of texts already available at the school (Elliott and Olive, 2019); in addition, resources and knowledge developed over years of teaching the same play save teachers time and money which can then be focused elsewhere, particularly since the introduction of new specifications at both GCSE and A level in recent years (Elliott, 2017).

The focus on teachers is exemplified by the Learning and Performance Network (LPN), a ten year education programme run by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), which trained teachers over a period of three years each to use rehearsal room techniques in their classrooms (Winston, 2015); these techniques are a performance-based pedagogy, similar to the teaching methods promoted by Gibson in the 1980s. The aim of this pedagogy is that there is 'an experience of shared learning where the teacher/director facilitates supported but challenging exploration towards a collaborative understanding of the text' (Irish, 2011, p.7). Drama activities and textual study are closely linked in this approach, in contrast with the polarisation of these methods that has been the object of much criticism (see section 2.3.5).

Evaluations of the LPN have been predominantly quantitative. Although they provide statistical evidence from the students about their attitudes to studying Shakespeare (The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016a, 2016b), they do not offer many students' comments in their own voices about their studies of Shakespeare's plays. Before participating in the LPN, 'Students typically talked about finding Shakespeare's work "boring" and "irrelevant"' (The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016a, p.2), reinforcing the generalised stereotype of young people disliking Shakespeare discussed above. Only seven student voices are quoted, in one report, only two of whom are secondary school students: one of these two is quoted as saying, '"when you are reading at your desk or just watching the film version, I have no interest because you are being told everything. This way I feel better about myself because I am learning things for myself"' (The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016a, p.33). These students' comments cannot therefore be taken as indicative of all the students involved in the LPN, thus reducing the student perspective to an occasional soundbite, rather than an important voice in the research. The second report also explicitly focuses on 'teacher reflections, acquired through 40 in depth interviews' (The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016b, p.3), in spite of estimating that almost 700,000 students have benefited from their schools' involvement in the LPN.

Teachers have also been asked to reflect on their own experiences of Shakespeare as students (Selman, 2008). While this research found that 'the teacher is the key factor determining the impact Shakespeare has on the learner' (Selman, 2008, p.53), it is problematic because it focuses on adult reflections of school experiences of Shakespeare, rather than capturing the immediate responses of young people to their English lessons. Although 20 of the 28 respondents reported 'an on-going positive relationship with [Shakespeare's] works' (Selman, 2008, p.52), these were all teachers, which indicates that they were successful academically both at school and in higher education and therefore not necessarily indicative of their own students' experiences of Shakespeare.

Occasionally, research has asked students still in school for their views on studying Shakespeare. John Yandell's research with Year 8 students shows how individual young people's responses to Shakespeare are, with one quoted as saying, '"before I started *Romeo and Juliet* I thought it would be boring and hard to understand"' (1997, p.279), but another commenting, '"before I started the play I knew that I would enjoy it because I like love stories and because people have told me that Shakespeare is a good writer"' (1997, p.293). Yandell also found that students struggle with understanding the language, but that this does not put them off Shakespeare; one teacher in his study said, '"they like reading parts in Shakespeare because it's a notion of achievement. "I have read Shakespeare – I can do it"."' (1997, p.291), and a student commented, '"I thought *The Merchant of Venice* was easier to understand than I expected it to be. This was because Sir would stop and explain certain important things"' (1997, p.285). These student comments directly counter the generalisation that students are bored by Shakespeare. They do not deny that studying the plays presents challenges, but they show that, with appropriate support from teachers, students can rise to the challenge, giving them pleasure and a sense of achievement.

Twenty years later, Audrey Wood found that students have clear ideas about which teaching strategies help them to learn most effectively, with similar results to Yandell: practice at reading a play out loud develops their familiarity with Shakespeare's language; teacher-led instruction supports understanding; and film clips help with imagining the characters (Wood, 2017). In particular, 'some students need to know and understand the entire narrative before they can […] "close-read" an extract' (Wood, 2017, p.323). Those students who engage more positively with studying Shakespeare see a direct link between teacher-led instruction and comprehension of the text, leading to more confident written outcomes (Wood, 2017). Once students have become familiar with text and story through explicit instruction, they are then more willing to engage with creative approaches to studying the plays (Wood, 2017).

Ultimately, students study Shakespeare because they are required to write essays about one of his plays as part of their English Literature GCSE examination. Research into the Key Stage 3 Shakespeare examination, abolished in 2008, offers some insight into what happens when a text is studied for examination. Jane Coles suggests:

> the discourse of the test is likely to intrude in such a way as to close down the classroom as a social space and to impose its own form of pedagogic practice, more concerned with information and rules rather than interpretation and experimentation.
>
> (Coles, 2009, p.47)

Katherine Erricker, exploring the requirements of GCSE examinations, comments, 'the language in which [students] couch their observations on the text needs to be analytical' (2014, p.86). The

development of independent and resilient learners through the use of a range of activities in the classroom therefore 'exists in conflict with a culture that prioritises examination performance as an educational goal' (Erricker, 2014, p.87). Erricker's research found that 'pupils who have performance goals tend to evade negative judgements by playing it safe […] prioritizing effortless success over learning goals that increase their competence' (2014, p.89), and concluded, 'an exploratory, dialogic mode of learning is one that jars with a time-pressured exam culture' (2014, p.92). These comments suggest that, while school culture is examination-focused, teacher-led understanding of the text will be valued above exploratory, drama-based approaches to studying Shakespeare, regardless of the investment in projects such as Shakespeare and Schools and the LPN.

2.4.3 Shakespeare taught through film

The use of film to teach Shakespeare appears to have become ubiquitous. It is a more cost-efficient option than seeing a live theatre production, more easily available, and also more readily checked by the teacher for its suitability for a young audience (Batho, 1998). This means that 'for many pupils their only experience of seeing a Shakespeare play is through watching it on video' (Batho, 1998, p.169). Gibson lists a number of advantages and disadvantages of using film to teach Shakespeare identified by teachers who took part in a survey on the use of film and video in school Shakespeare teaching, some of which are:

Claimed Advantages

- Ease of operation
- Comparative use where alternative versions exist
- Opportunities for rewinding, reviewing, and detailed analysis of a particular scene, sequence, speech action
- Easy to stop at any desired point for discussion
- Can be viewed under 'normal classroom circumstances'

Disadvantages

- Only the director's intention available: 'You see only what he/she wants you to see'
- Familiarity of medium can make for uncritical viewing
- The TV/film 'audience' can in no way interact with the performance

(Gibson, 1994, p.12).

A key recommendation from the teachers in this survey was, 'DON'T present it as *the* video, *the* play. It is simply one production – a particular realisation by a particular director, at a particular time, with particular ideas in mind' (Gibson, 1994, p.12, emphasis in the original) (see section 2.3.5). In addition, 'the most stressed recommendation is that students should see more than

one version' (Gibson, 1994, p.12). However, Coles found that this is not common practice: 'in the lessons I observed none of the teachers make comparisons across available alternatives, even to look at how key scenes have been interpreted by different directors' (2014, p.75). Film also is problematic because Shakespeare's language is sometimes replaced with visual imagery; in analysing *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet,* Abigail Rokison comments, 'while many of the cuts function to make the story flow with greater speed and clarity and little is lost in terms of essential content, the main criticism is that [the film script] appears to show little regard for the play's verse […] Luhrmann also cuts much of the play's rhetoric and complex wordplay' (2013, p.45). These filmed versions cause two key difficulties for students: there are significant differences between the film script and the text studied in lessons, and the visual imagery of the film often makes a much more powerful impression on students' imaginations than the text itself.

Interviews with the teachers suggested that 'there is little consensus between them as to how each film might be organised structurally within the series of lessons', with some showing it in full, either before or during the scheme of work, and others showing parts in parallel with reading the text (Coles, 2014, p.76). Coles finds that 'English teachers appreciate the importance of performance, and welcome the benefit of film in providing easy classroom access to a professional performance of the complete play', however, 'that teachers generally do not draw students' attention to the differences between film and theatre as performance modes is problematic' (2014, p.80). The study concludes that 'observations of teachers working within curricular and assessment constraints provide a glimpse into just how difficult it is to avoid reproducing authoritative readings of Shakespeare's plays in the classroom' (Coles, 2014, p.81). Coles' study was published 20 years after Gibson's survey report. However, the issue of one film version of a play being identified as *the* authoritative version seems to continue to be a problem for students who watch the plays through this medium.

2.4.4 Criticism of research into Shakespeare in the curriculum

The quality and scope of research into Shakespeare in schools has been heavily criticised:

> Educational research on Shakespeare specifically is characterised by the local, anecdotal, under-theorised and un-reflexive. Much of the literature reports research undertaken with a single group of students […] Potentially worthwhile because of the depth and focus such a project allows, this kind of research becomes problematic when used (as it so often is) to generalise about the value of Shakespeare on students' education and welfare, or to boast of students' engagement in lessons on the Bard, without taking into consideration the effect of the enthusiastic researcher's presence

> or the novelty of the activities that differ from the mundane, average classroom. (Olive, 2015, pp. 9-10)

There are several explicit criticisms here. The description of research as 'local, anecdotal, under-theorised and un-reflexive' suggests that it is not rigorous enough to be regarded as a valid contribution to debates on Shakespeare in the classroom. 'Local' suggests a focus on small-scale case studies, and 'anecdotal' implies that the research lacks valid evidence. However, while Sarah Olive criticises generalisations from small-scale projects, they have much to offer as part of a larger body of research: 'knowledge […] especially in a professional field such as education, usually progresses through the accumulation of evidence across many studies, rather than because of one large-scale definitive project, and small-scale research has much to offer here' (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.48). My own study of the legacy of the Learning and Performance Network (LPN) (Baldwin, 2015) also indicates that activities undertaken during a period of research may not always 'differ from the mundane, average classroom'.

One important problem is that much of the research undertaken into the Shakespeare classroom is unpublished and therefore unavailable for review. For example, teachers involved in the LPN were required to undertake such research as part of their commitment to the project (Winston, 2015), while postgraduate students at the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford Upon Avon, part of Birmingham University, also research Shakespeare in education,[10] but these research projects are not generally available. In addition, there currently seems to be no overview of methods and findings from these research projects that could contribute to discussions about the place of Shakespeare in the curriculum and the methods used for teaching and learning his plays.

Olive's criticisms are part of a wider debate about the quality and applicability of educational research generally (Atkinson, 2000). The purpose of educational research, Elizabeth Atkinson suggests, is to 'inform discussion […] about the nature, purpose and content of the educational enterprise', rather than to focus on '"What works" [which] looks back, in reality, to what has sometimes worked for some people in the past' (2000, p.328). Research must therefore offer suggestions, which may be useful in other settings than the one in which the research was carried out, rather than solutions, which are less likely to be.

2.5 Conclusion

Theories about learning are complex and varied, and mostly focus on how teaching can be changed to improve learning, rather than on the learners themselves (for example in Hattie and

[10] See https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/shakespeare-education.aspx for details.

Yates, 2014). These theories often present learning as an individual activity, in contrast with sociocultural theory which presents learning as primarily a social activity (see section 2.2.1). Learning is situated in its social, cultural and historical contexts, including both the contexts of the learners and the contexts of the institution in which those learners study. The environment for learning is also important: school trips take students into different environments which have the potential to accelerate and/or deepen learning that has begun in the classroom (see section 2.2.2). Theatre offers one, albeit contested, environment for learning about Shakespeare's plays to support the in-school study of Shakespeare that is prescribed in the English National Curriculum.

This chapter has established that there is very little research into students' experiences of live theatre. The TheatreSpace project in Australia is a notable exception (see section 2.3.2). The audience experience is an important part of PSwDB, but the project's evaluations have focused mostly on the effects of attendance on subsequent in-school studies of Shakespeare, aligning it with TIE projects that use theatre to teach (see section 2.3.4), rather than offering detailed observations of the students during their theatre visit.

There is far more research into the teaching of Shakespeare in schools. Much of that research has focused on pedagogy such as the active approaches to teaching promoted by Rex Gibson (see section 2.4.1) and subsequently by the RSC. However, the need to prepare students for high-stakes examinations appears to take precedence over development of a drama-based pedagogy, also limiting the range of Shakespeare plays taught in secondary schools (see section 2.4.2). The use of film in the Shakespeare classroom now appears to be ubiquitous, and is often the only way that students can see a performance of a Shakespeare play, although without explicit teaching, the film can be seen as definitive rather than one interpretation of the text.

Research into the teaching of Shakespeare has, as a field, been heavily criticised for its narrow focus and lack of theoretical underpinning. However, in drawing together the research discussed in this chapter, it is possible to see that much of this research focuses on teaching rather than learning. Together the research also highlights the competing needs of students that arise from Shakespeare's position within the National Curriculum (see section 1.2), between a focus on examinations and a focus on exploratory study of the plays.

In all the literature considered in this chapter, I have sought an authentic student voice, and mostly found it lacking. Some student opinions have been gathered using quantitative methods, particularly through surveys using scaled questions; more rarely students have been quoted directly, offering their own opinions about their learning experiences. The desire to hear the students' own voices has directly informed the methodology chosen for this doctoral study,

detailed in Chapter 3. Theoretically, theatre productions such as PSwDB can provide learning opportunities that support the curriculum. Anecdotally, observers of students in the theatre and on other school trips suggest that the students do learn from these experiences outside the classroom, particularly when subsequent lessons in school use the school trip to inform future teaching. However, only through gathering the views of the students themselves can learning be explored from the learners' perspectives. Research now needs to make the students themselves its focus, allowing them to present their own ideas in their own words, so that they can challenge the generalised views that have previously been offered on their behalf.

3 Methodology

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
>
> *Hamlet* (1.5.168-9)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the philosophical and practical frameworks within which this research is situated, and how it was carried out, in order to answer my research question, 'How do students respond to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank?'. In order to understand the students' responses, it was necessary to choose a methodology that would enable their voices to be heard and that would offer some context for their comments, since 'schools [have] their own unique cultures' (Simons, 2009, p.7), and 'every act of teaching and learning is saturated with the specificity of time and place' (Grumet, 1998, p.7) (see section 2.2.1). I therefore chose a qualitative methodology that would offer students the opportunity to use their own words to answer my questions. I carried out a pilot study in 2017 to test this methodology, and this was instrumental in designing the main research study in 2018. In addition, the number of participants in the main study enabled me to see patterns of responses to Shakespeare and this theatre production across the data during analysis, which would have been less evident with a smaller cohort; these patterns are explored in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

3.2 Ontological and epistemological paradigms

This research is underpinned by sociocultural theory based on the work of Russian psychologist L.S. Vygotsky (see section 2.2.1), who found that thought and language develop as a result of participation in social and collective activities, and subsequently become internalised as part of an individual's identity (Vygotsky, 1978). This results in the view that 'all individual meanings are derived from the meanings made available in the collective; hence meanings are inherently shared' (The Open University, 2016, p.58). Since each person participates in multiple social and cultural groups, those shared meanings are local and varied, particularly as different cultures value different types of knowledge (Rogoff, 2003). Meaning is therefore individually situated and subjective.

The use of sociocultural theory situates this study ontologically within an interpretivist paradigm, where 'the central endeavour […] is to understand the subjective world of human experience' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.17). Reality is 'socially constructed,

subjectively experienced and the result of human thought expressed through language' (Sikes, 2004, p.20). From this perspective, 'the *only* world we can study is a semiotic world of meanings, represented in the signs and symbols that people use to think and communicate' (Potter, 2006, p.79, emphasis in the original). This view of the world leads to an epistemological assumption that 'knowledge is experiential and subjective', and that research within this paradigm 'will usually place considerable emphasis on the accounts given by informants – either verbally in interviews or written and in response to questionnaires' (Sikes, 2004, p.22). These accounts will help the researcher to understand 'the way in which individuals create, modify and interpret the world in which they find themselves' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.6), although researchers are always influenced by their own contexts and cannot ever fully understand how others see the world (Schutz, 1972). Reality and knowledge are therefore constructs based on human experience, rather than 'external, independent, given and objectively real' (Sikes, 2004, p.20). This ontological and epistemological stance informs the strategy chosen to answer the research question.

3.3 Research strategy and design

A research strategy is 'a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal' (Denscombe, 2017, p.3). It requires an overview of what is necessary to answer a research question. In setting this research within an interpretivist paradigm that seeks to understand individual experience through the lens of sociocultural theory, it was important to choose a research strategy that would enable students to tell me their responses to PSwDB in their own words, from within their different social and cultural contexts. This would mean trying to understand their contexts before visiting Shakespeare's Globe, to situate their reflections on the theatre visit itself. Each student would have his or her own view on the theatre production and its value. In order to access these views, I chose a survey strategy.

A survey has 'a commitment to a breadth of study, a focus on the snapshot at a given point in time and a dependence on empirical data' (Denscombe, 2003, p.7). A survey is not a research method, although it is often seen as synonymous with a quantitative questionnaire for collecting statistical data (for example by Punch and Oancea, 2014). When understood as a strategy, however, a survey focuses on the research participants rather than on the type of data generated, 'purposely seeking the necessary information from relevant people and relevant sites' (Denscombe, 2017, p.11). Lack of breadth had also been a focus for criticism of other studies of Shakespeare in education (see section 2.4.4), and using a survey strategy was an attempt to counter that criticism by generating data from a wide range of students participating in PSwDB. Further data would also be generated from interviews and observations.

Student voice is lacking in much of the research into studying Shakespeare, with assumptions made about students' attitudes and opinions (see section 2.4). In the twentieth century, children's views were often seen as unimportant by society (Alderson and Goodey, 1996). A 'new sociology of childhood' has since developed, which describes children as 'agentic […] actively participating in the construction of their own social situations' (Marr and Malone, 2007, p.3). From this perspective, 'allowing young people the dignity of speaking for themselves offers a place from which to begin transforming the often disempowering experience of childhood' (Boler, 2002, cited in Marr and Malone, 2007, p.8). This approach 'not only seeks the child's perspective – it also acknowledges children as "competent" human beings in their own right' (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.51), rather than treating their opinions as 'peripheral to the understanding of the issues which fundamentally affect them' (Hazel, 1995, p.2). Young people 'have something valuable to say and have a right to be consulted about their school experiences' (Marr and Malone, 2007, p.12). For this research, I wanted to acknowledge the students as 'social actors and co-constructors of their own reality' (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.52), allowing them to speak freely in their own words as far as possible, without being influenced by my assumptions. This led to a qualitative research design.

Qualitative research aims 'to look at something holistically and comprehensively, to study it in its complexity, and to understand it in its context' (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.210); it also 'strives to record the multiple interpretations of, intentions in and meanings given to situations and events' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.202). It therefore aims to explore something as completely as possible whilst understanding that that something can only ever be understood subjectively. Furthermore, qualitative research 'has an unrivalled capacity to constitute compelling arguments about *how things work in particular contexts*', while being 'capable of producing very well-founded *cross-contextual generalities*' (Mason, 2002, p.1, emphasis in the original). The choice of a qualitative research design would therefore add depth to this study by generating contextualised data from individual participants that would also offer the possibility of drawing out generalisations that could be applied in other contexts.

All the data included in this research were generated specifically for inclusion in this study. I therefore refer to data generation rather than data collection, which implies that 'the researcher is seen as actively constructing knowledge' rather than 'simply work[ing] out where to find data which already exist in a collectable state' (Mason, 2002, p.52). Data were generated through questionnaires, interviews and observations.

3.3.1 Questionnaire design

I chose to generate breadth of data through questionnaires. A questionnaire is 'a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information […] able to be administered without the presence of the researcher' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.377). I planned to ask students to complete two questionnaires, one before their theatre visit and one afterwards. I wanted teachers to administer the questionnaires on my behalf so needed to design them with the guidelines from the British Educational Research Association (BERA) about teacher workload in mind (see section 3.4). I had to consider the setting in which they would be administered: I expected this to be during English lessons, and my own experience suggests that English teachers have only occasional access to computing facilities, so questionnaires would need to be paper-based rather than on-line. In addition, I wanted them to be one double-sided sheet of A4 paper, to make them manageable for teachers to facilitate and for students to complete. Advice on questionnaire design is also to leave requests for personal information such as names until last (Opie, 2004). However, practice in schools is usually for names to be written at the top of the first page of a piece of work, and my questionnaires followed this practice. Giving names was optional but enabled me to match pre-theatre visit questionnaires with those completed after the theatre visit, to compare students' responses before and after seeing the production. It also enabled me to choose interview participants.

Questions were predominantly open-ended, in keeping with my research design. These are 'useful if the possible answers are unknown or the questionnaire is exploratory […] They also enable respondents to answer as much as they wish' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.382). This openness was important so that the students could express themselves in their own words, rather than in words that I had chosen on their behalf. Some closed questions were also included, asking about activities undertaken in lessons where Shakespeare was being studied, and about prior experiences of theatre. The list of activities was based on those debated in the literature (see section 2.4) and on my own experiences of teaching Shakespeare in secondary schools; I also added the option for students to add any 'other' activities that I had not included.

Questionnaires can be a problematic data generation method: they may not be completed correctly; some questions may be missed out; respondents may lie in their answers; and people of limited literacy may struggle to understand the questions and/or write a response (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). However, it seemed reasonable to assume that most students in English secondary schools would have adequate literacy skills or in-class support to enable them to participate in this research method. Questionnaires would offer a wide range of opinions about Shakespeare at school and at the theatre and therefore were the best tool for the breadth of data I wanted to explore.

3.3.2 Interview design

I chose to conduct group interviews in each school, mindful of the power dynamic present in adult-child interviews that might dominate a one-to-one discussion (see section 3.4). Group interviews have several advantages, particularly when interviewing young people. They offer the opportunity for a broader range of people to participate, and allow the participants to listen and respond to alternative points of view, using group dynamics to develop or challenge ideas (Denscombe, 2017). In addition, there is the potential for a group interview to 'take you in a new direction, suggesting what is important to the interviewees rather than what initially is of interest to the researcher' (Rubin and Rubin, 2012, p.180). Group interviews were also intended to offer the students peer support when talking to me as an outsider to their school, creating a safe and collaborative environment with people they knew, and encouraging them to speak honestly. However, group interviews can be problematic, particularly since there is the potential for one participant to dominate the conversation and for another to say very little (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). There may also be 'a degree of social acceptability bias' which 'may be particularly pronounced amongst a group of young people' (Flanagan, Greenfield, Coad and Neilson, 2015, p.13), suggesting that some in the group may not wish to express opinions that might not be acceptable to their peers. Group dynamics can be very complex and must be taken into account when considering the meaning of each participant's comments (see section 3.7).

Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured, depending on how much control the interviewer wishes to exert over the participant's responses (Denscombe, 2017). For this research, a semi-structured format was used, where 'the researcher has a specific topic to learn about, prepares a limited number of questions in advance, and plans to ask follow-up questions' based on the participants' responses (Rubin and Rubin, 2012, p.31). This allows the participant to 'develop ideas and speak more widely on the ideas raised by the researcher […] there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest' (Denscombe, 2017, p.204). This format would enable me to guide the students to speak about Shakespeare and their theatre visit in more detail than their questionnaire responses would give, but would allow them some control over the direction of the conversation in response to my questions. Similar semi-structured interviews were planned with one teacher in each school, to explore the school context and the reasons for participating in PSwDB 2018. In order to report the students' and teachers' comments as faithfully as possible, all interviews would also be recorded.

3.3.3 Observations

In addition to questionnaires and interviews, I planned to observe the students in workshops and at Shakespeare's Globe while watching the production. These observations would have two benefits: first, I would share the students' theatre experiences and see their reactions to the production moment-by-moment; and second, my observations would provide topics for discussion in the post-theatre visit interviews. My first observation of the 2018 production also informed the questions on the post-theatre visit questionnaire.

Observations generate data from seeing things 'as they normally happen' (Denscombe, 2017, p.225). Participant observations involve the researcher in '"shadowing" a person or group through normal life, witnessing at first hand […] the culture/events of interest' (Denscombe, 2017, p.235). This 'has the potential to yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods' such as questionnaires and interviews (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.456). Usually, this is a method for observing people's lives over time used by ethnographers (Taylor, 2002). However, it can also support other data generation methods since 'not all knowledge is […] articulable, recountable or constructable in an interview' (Mason, 2002, p.85).

As with interviews, observations can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured; semi-structured observations 'will have an agenda of issues but will gather data to illuminate these issues in a far less predetermined or systematic manner' than a structured observation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.457). Semi-structured observations would allow me to focus on the students' responses to PSwDB while being open to any student behaviour that might occur, although all observations are inherently selective, since it is impossible to record everything about the people and/or event being observed (Mason, 2002). Observations are also problematic because they are biased 'in terms of what, why, when, where, who and how the observer is observing' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.459). It would therefore be important to make field notes to record observations as events occurred or very soon afterwards, to generate enough data for later reflection and analysis.

3.4 Research ethics and researcher positionality

The basic ethical requirement of all research is to 'do no harm' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.85). This requirement covers the planning of research, the treatment of participants, and compliance with data protection legislation regarding the use and storage of data (Great Britain. *Data Protection Act 2018*). The British Educational Research Association also issues guidelines highlighting key considerations for research in schools (BERA, 2011). One such guideline is for researchers to 'minimize the impact of their research on the normal working and

workloads of participants' (BERA, 2011, p.7). Research with participants under the age of 18 requires particular ethical consideration to ensure that appropriate care is taken to protect them. To ensure that this research complied with these ethical requirements, approval was sought from the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), and updated after the pilot project had been carried out (see Appendix II). I also applied for a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate, which is a requirement for working in schools in the United Kingdom. This was particularly important as I wished to interview students without a member of staff present, since this might inhibit their responses.

The power differential between researcher and younger participants is particularly important when asking for consent to research with children, since there is the potential for persuasion and influence (Punch and Oancea, 2014). Head teachers, teachers and parents all act to protect the rights of young people in schools, and consent needs to be obtained from each of them before the students themselves can be approached. The students themselves then need to give their consent for participation, as their 'right to freedom and self-determination' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.77). Voluntary, informed consent must be continually negotiated and must include 'a real and legitimate opportunity' for students to opt out of the research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.79). It is important to recognise that students may not feel able to withdraw from research, even though they have been told that they have the right to do so. When school and parents have given consent, students may feel under pressure to comply with the request for an interview; once the interview has started, they may feel embarrassed to change their minds, particularly if they feel powerless in relation to the researcher or if they are in a group interview with their peers, as in this study. However, since the student participants in this research were all aged 13-14 years old, I saw them as 'capable of forming his or her own views' according to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR, 1989), and I therefore accepted their agreement to be interviewed at face value.

All research took place during school hours and all completion of questionnaires, interviews with teachers and students and observations of student workshops occurred on school premises. The consent forms used for this research are found in Appendix III. The students agreed to have their interviews recorded as part of this consent, which explicitly stated their right to withdraw, their right to confidentiality, and that all their comments would be anonymised. Interviewees were asked to choose their own pseudonyms to ensure this anonymity in any subsequent report of my findings (see Table 6 on page 70). I read the information letter and consent form aloud to ensure that the students understood them before signing them. Following the principle of continuous informed consent, the students were given repeated opportunities to withdraw

from this research. Each interviewee was also offered the opportunity to receive a typed transcript of their interviews, allowing them to amend or withdraw comments before being anonymised and included in my analysis; this offer was not taken up by any of the participants. One parent did not return a consent form for their daughter, not wanting her to take part, according to her teacher, and at least one student did not participate in the post-theatre visit interview in spite of being in school, according to her peers. Other students did not participate in the post-show interviews without anyone giving me a reason. A few students also refused to write their names on their questionnaires. I understood that these were conscious choices not to participate, although the students who did not participate in the second interview did not request that their data should be removed from the study.

My position as an outsider, researching in schools with students who did not know me, also needed careful consideration. Studies have shown that a range of contextual factors can have a direct influence on the success of interviews with children, including the 'demeanour of the adult' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.207). Aware of the age difference between the students and myself, and the potential for them to identify me with their teachers, I thought carefully about my presentation, dressing in casual clothes for my school visits and introducing myself with my first name, since the 'interviewer effect' can affect how participants behave and respond during interviews (Denscombe, 2003, p.169). However, my status as a visitor to the school may still have affected students' behaviour and responses to my questions. In addition, the location of the interviews, often in rooms not otherwise visited by the students, needed accounting for when considering the validity of the data generated, as the environment can affect student behaviour (Franks, 2015).

3.5 The pilot study

Pilot studies are an important part of research design: 'the method should always be tested out in advance to check how well it works in practice' (Denscombe, 2017, p.180). The pilot study 'needs to be representative of the main sample or population to be studied' but the participants used for the pilot should not then be part of the main study, since they will have become sensitised to the questions and therefore their answers will have been influenced by their prior knowledge (Opie, 2004, p.105).

The pilot study for this research focused on the 2017 PSwDB production of *The Taming of the Shrew.* It was designed to allow me to see how PSwDB works as a project and to test my data generation methods on a smaller group of students in preparation for the main study in 2018. The pilot study showed how choosing participants and data generation tools could be improved

to enable a more carefully constructed research project which would contextualise students' comments in more detail and would offer more opportunity for cross-contextual generalisation.

3.5.1 Choosing participants for the pilot study

The aim for the pilot study was to choose one school that had not previously participated in PSwDB. The students' comments on questionnaires and in interviews would therefore be less likely to be influenced by older students' experiences. I also wanted the school to be engaging with all elements of the project, including the CPD sessions for teachers and the in-school workshops for students, so that I could see how this additional provision was used to support the theatre visit. This school would be situated in London for ease of access over several visits. However, no single school participating in PSwDB in 2017 fulfilled all these criteria. I therefore researched in two schools, one of which was new to PSwDB, and which between them were participating in all elements of the project.

Pilot School A, named The Heminges School in this research, is a girls' school with 180 students in each year group. The whole of Year 8, aged 12-13 years, saw the production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at Shakespeare's Globe as part of their English curriculum. Some English teachers attended a CPD session offered by Globe Education as part of the project, and the school booked three student workshops, the maximum number available without charge; this resulted in only half of the year group being able to participate. Pilot School B, named Condell Academy in this research, is a mixed school that had not previously participated in PSwDB. A group of 24 Year 9/10 students, aged 13-15 years, studying towards the BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) qualification in Performing Arts, attended Shakespeare's Globe with their Drama teachers. They also participated in an in-school workshop as part of the project.

3.5.2 Research methods

Pilot study data was generated from questionnaires, interviews and observations. I observed one continuing professional development (CPD) session for teachers in November 2016, when teachers were introduced to the key themes being drawn out in this production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, in addition to generating data with the two pilot study schools.

All students were asked to complete a pre-theatre visit questionnaire, which focused on their previous experiences of live performance. In Condell Academy, however, only 13 students completed this questionnaire while the rest of the class was on a school trip for another subject area, resulting in incomplete data. Their teacher, Lucy, told me that some of her students had problems with attendance, although most were present for the student workshop. I observed the workshops in both schools, and I observed students from The Heminges School at Shakespeare's Globe as they watched the performance. All students were then asked to

complete a post-theatre visit questionnaire, which focused on their reflections on the theatre building and the production, and one group of four students in each school was interviewed to add further depth to their comments on the questionnaires. At Heminges School, the interviewees were chosen by Philippa, the Head of English, and came from her own English class, the top English set in Year 8; the interview took place the day after the theatre visit with Philippa working in the corner of the room, and felt rushed as she wanted to complete both the student interview and her own interview within one lesson, after which someone else needed the room for teaching. At Condell Academy, every student was given a consent form to give permission to be interviewed, as their teacher, Lucy, was concerned about absenteeism. The interview took place in May 2017, approximately eight weeks after seeing the production, as a result of other commitments and the school holidays in April, but the interview took place in a room in the school reserved for this purpose. As I had not attended the theatre with these students, our interview could not build upon shared experience, which would be an important consideration for the main study. I also interviewed Philippa and Lucy, the teachers who had organised the theatre visits, to understand why they wanted their students to see the production.

Data generated by the two schools participating in the pilot study was transcribed and partially analysed, following a six-stage structure for thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013) and using the CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) program Nvivo 11. It became clear that the differences between the student cohorts from each school meant that it was not possible to compare responses across the entire data set; this was an important consideration for choosing participants in the main study, as it prevented me from developing any useful generalisations from the pilot study data. Data from the questionnaires were also entered onto an Excel spreadsheet to allow counting of responses, offering an overview of theatre-going practices amongst these participants, although again their different ages and subject areas clearly affected this numerical data and prevented comparison. The data generated in the interviews with teachers, however, added to the insights into the project offered by teachers in the main study, and were therefore analysed more fully.

3.5.3 Reflections on the pilot study

The pilot study highlighted several issues that needed to be addressed in the main study in 2018: the criteria for choosing participant schools; the detail and focus of each of the two questionnaires; the time taken for student interviews; the need to carry out those interviews without a teacher present; and the need for more detailed observations of students at the theatre for each participating school.

Data analysis showed that selecting schools with similar cohorts would offer a much greater opportunity for comparison between schools. This similarity should be of age and of subject area, since comparing Year 8 English students with Year 9/10 Performing Arts students demonstrated different approaches to and a different focus for the theatre visit amongst those students and their teachers. The data also showed that prior participation in PSwDB was unimportant, since my interest was in the student experience in context, and the school's prior participation would be part of that context. In addition, the pilot project had proven that finding schools in London who had not previously taken part in PSwDB would be difficult; London would, however, remain my focus for ease of repeated access to the schools.

I also decided to remove the criterion that schools would be accessing all parts of the ancillary provision as well as attending the theatre production. Asking teachers about their choices whether or not to participate in the CPD and book the in-school workshops for their students had offered some useful reflections on how these elements of the project were seen in school; by removing this criterion I would be able to generate more considered responses about their value. More important was the data provided by students at Heminges School, where the whole year group had attended the theatre, offering a wide range of responses to my questionnaires. Additionally, although I did not want to make gender a focus for my research, I was aware that most participants in the pilot study were female, suggesting that I needed to consider gender when choosing schools to try to achieve a more balanced representation of students' responses to PSwDB, since many London schools are single-gender.

The data generation tools also needed revising. The pre-theatre visit questionnaire needed to focus more on prior knowledge of and attitudes towards Shakespeare, to enable recognition of any effect on students as a result of seeing the production at Shakespeare's Globe. This would need to allow for different experiences in school as well as with families and friends outside school, to add depth to the students' educational, social and cultural contexts, in line with using sociocultural theory to underpin this research. The post-theatre visit questionnaire also needed to be revised to ask more detailed questions about the theatre experience and its value to the students. In addition, I wanted to add a pre-theatre visit interview, to offer further detailed insights into students' attitudes to Shakespeare. The interviews themselves should be unsupervised to enable students to speak honestly, and I resolved to make this a condition of how the interviews should be carried out.

In the pilot study I attended only one performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*, with The Heminges School. This meant that I did not share the theatre experience of the students at Condell Academy, and could not ask questions about their theatre visit which built upon that

shared experience. The play was also one that I did not know well, and I realised that I needed better knowledge of both the play and the production to enable me to observe more closely the students' reactions during each performance. These observations would themselves provide important data as well as giving more detailed information on which to base subsequent interview questions

The pilot study was important for testing data generation methods, demonstrating where tools needed further development and where important opportunities for data generation had been missed. It also showed the importance of careful selection of participants to offer the potential for thematic generalisations across contexts, while understanding that students are situated within their own social and cultural contexts.

3.6 The main research study

The main research study focused on the 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. In response to my reflections on the pilot study, the criteria for choosing participants changed and the methods used for generating data from those participants were developed to ensure a much clearer focus on my research question. The addition of a pre-theatre visit interview provided further data about experiences of Shakespeare before visiting Shakespeare's Globe. I also observed planning meetings and the training of Globe Education Practitioners (GEPs) to give myself an holistic understanding of how PSwDB is designed to meet the perceived needs of its target audience.

3.6.1 Choosing participants for the main study

For the main study I chose London schools where the English department was taking the whole cohort of year 9 students, aged 13 to 14, to the theatre. I wanted each school to come from a different London borough, to access a range of social, cultural and school contexts, and to be mindful of gender balance if some schools were single-sex. I was also aware that some schools might have a strong religious affiliation which might affect students' responses.

The choice of schools taking a whole year group to the theatre was a direct result of the range of responses provided by students from The Heminges School in the pilot study. This inclusivity would help to counter any bias arising from researching with groups who had self-selected or who had been selected by teachers to attend the production; self-selection in particular might bias the findings in favour of positive attitudes to Shakespeare. Students would therefore have a range of attitudes to and expectations for seeing Shakespeare at the theatre, offering a breadth of viewpoints that would contrast with the generalisations stated in the literature (see section 2.4.2).

I chose to research with Year 9 because most students in this year group would already have studied at least one Shakespeare play, according to the requirements of the National Curriculum (see section 1.2); each school was required to state the year group of the students attending the theatre when applying for tickets. These students would therefore be able to offer their opinions from a position of some experience and would be able to comment on the value that PSwDB adds to their in-school learning. In addition, Year 9 students are not working towards high stakes examinations and their teachers would therefore be more likely to give permission for them to participate in this research.

Globe Education provided me with a list of applicants for tickets for *Much Ado About Nothing* as at 1st November 2017. Of these, twenty London schools had applied for their whole Year 9 cohort to see the production. Thirteen of these schools had an Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) rating of 1 (Outstanding) or 2 (Good). An assumption was made that schools rated 3 (Requires Improvement) or 4 (Inadequate) would be less likely to agree to participate in my research since they would be undergoing repeated inspections working towards improved provision for their students and I was mindful of the BERA guideline to minimise the impact of my research on the daily practices of the schools. This assumption was problematic in that it denied these schools the option of participation in my research, but it seemed a reasonable judgement to make. I applied to nine schools on the shortlist in total, mindful of the additional criteria of location, gender and religious affiliation, resulting in four schools in four different boroughs across London agreeing to participate; the socioeconomic data for these four schools are found in Table 4. These schools were initially labelled A, B, C and D, in the order in which they agreed to participate, and were later given pseudonyms.

Interview participants were chosen based on their written responses on questionnaire 1. The use of these questionnaires for this selection process inevitably advantaged those with higher levels of written literacy (Denscombe, 2003) (see section 3.3.1). However, very few questionnaires were filled in in a manner that suggested difficulty with either understanding the questions or with writing down a response. It is unclear how many students may have had assistance from school staff or how many questionnaires were not returned as a result of a lack of assistance, but this research did not set out to explore the experiences of students with special educational needs and disabilities and this would prove a useful subject for future research. A summary of the research participants and the data generated is found in Table 5; the 836 students in these four schools who attended the theatre represent 4.6% of the 18,283 students who received free tickets to the 2018 PSwDB production.

Table 4: Socioeconomic data for schools participating in this research

	Fletcher Comprehensive (School A)	Henslowe Academy (School B)	The Massinger School (School C)	Dekker High School (School D)	London	England[11]
Age range of students in the school	11-19	11-18	11-16	11-16		
Proportion of students whose first language is not English	51.1%	14.0%	90.6%	55.1%	41.4%	16.5%
Proportion of students eligible for Free School Meals[12] (FSM)	30.4%	6.3%	14.7%	27.8%	15.9%	13.9%
Proportion of students who have qualified for FSM in the past 6 years	58.7%	14.8%	49.2%	64.4%	(statistic not available)	28.6%
Proportion of students who have Special Educational Needs[13]	11.6%	8.7%	7.2%	11.9%	12.4%[14]	14.8%

Statistics for participating schools and for England were found at https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/ [Accessed 19 March 2018]. Statistics for secondary schools in London are from the school census dated January 2018, available at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018 [Accessed 19 March 2018]

[11] Figures based on census data for 11-16 year olds only.
[12] Free school meals (FSM) are offered to students from low-income families as one measure to combat poverty in the UK.
[13] This statistic includes those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and those without a Statement or EHCP but who receive SEN support in school.
[14] This statistic was calculated from the number of students with special educational needs in London compared to the total number of students in secondary schools in London, according to the 2018 schools census

Table 5: Summary of research participants

School	Gender	Year Group	Number of students in the year	Studying *Much Ado About Nothing* in school	Took part in CPD at Shakespeare's Globe	Booked in-school workshops	Number of initial questionnaires returned	Number of students interviewed before the performance	Number of post-show questionnaires returned	Number of students who completed both pre- and post- show questionnaires	Number of students interviewed after the performance	Number of teachers interviewed
Fletcher Comprehensive (School A)	Mixed	9	209	No	Yes – 1 teacher	No	191 (91%)	8 (2 groups) 4% of cohort	163 (78%)	140 (67%)	5 (2 groups) 2% of cohort	1 (Lead teacher for KS3)
Henslowe Academy (School B)	Boys	9	180	Yes	Yes – 2 teachers	Yes	167 (93%)	6 (2 groups) 3% of cohort	130 (72%)	117 (65%)	6 (2 groups) 3% of cohort	1 (Head of English)
The Massinger School (School C)	Girls	9	270	Yes	No	No	222 (82%)	8 (2 groups) 3% of cohort	238 (88%)	190 (70%)	7 (2 groups) 3% of cohort	1 (Head of English)
Dekker High School (School D)	Girls	9	177	No	No	No	138 (78%)	7 (2 groups) 4% of cohort	68 (38%)	51 (29%)	4 (1 group) 2% of cohort	1 (Year 9 English co-ordinator)
Totals			836				718 (86%)		599 (72%)	498 (60%)		

3.6.2 Data generation

Data generation tools for the main study can be found in Appendix IV. Data generation took place between November 2017 and April 2018; the production of *Much Ado About Nothing* ran from 23rd February to 21st March 2018. As planned, data was generated through questionnaires, group interviews and observations in schools and at the theatre, alongside further observations of and interviews with theatre personnel before and after the production run. This combination of data generation methods aimed to give an holistic view of PSwDB from both the students' and the theatre's perspectives. It also offered the opportunity for comparison of findings after the students' theatre visit (see section 3.7).

3.6.2.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were completed before and after students visited the theatre, as for the pilot study, but for the main study they had been rewritten to ask more detailed questions about students' experiences of Shakespeare. The first questionnaire aimed to discover students' attitudes towards and experiences of studying Shakespeare prior to seeing the PSwDB production, and was also used to choose students to participate in the group interviews. It was trialled with three students aged 13, 15 and 17, who commented on both the clarity of the questions and the likely responses of their own peers. The 13 year old, Jasmine[15], suggested that 'nobody' would answer positively to question 5, which asked whether students ever talk about Shakespeare outside lessons, but I chose to keep this question as it might offer some insights into students' family contexts, particularly if Shakespeare is part of family culture.

The second questionnaire focused on the students' experience of seeing the production at Shakespeare's Globe. This questionnaire was trialled solely by Jasmine, who commented on the wording of the questions, although as she had not attended the production itself, she could not answer them directly. It was not finalised until after I had observed the dress rehearsal and the first schools' performance, so that I could tailor my questions directly to what the students would see on stage. I delivered this to schools when I met them at the theatre, and asked the teachers to facilitate its completion as soon as possible after the students had seen the production, to gather their immediate reflections on what they had seen.

Completed questionnaires were sorted into alphabetical order of first names, since not all students included their surnames. Un-named questionnaires were filed behind the others for their school. Where possible, post-theatre visit questionnaires were matched with each student's pre-theatre visit questionnaire to give a more detailed understanding of that student's

[15] A pseudonym chosen by the student for the purposes of anonymity.

experiences of Shakespeare. Students were then given an alpha-numeric code using the letter initially given to their school, A, B, C or D, and starting at 001. Completion figures suggest that some classes may not have completed the questionnaires (see Table 5); some students may also have been absent from their lesson or unwilling to answer the questions. Not all students answered every question, but all responses were included in the data so that as many different students' views could be included in this research as possible. A summary of responses to each question can be found in Appendix V and the transcript of student A005's questionnaires can be found in Appendix IX.i as an example.

3.6.2.2 Interviews

Students were asked to participate in group interviews based on their responses on their pre-theatre visit questionnaires. I read through all the questionnaires and identified students who had made comments that clearly demonstrated either a negative attitude, a mixed attitude or a positive attitude towards Shakespeare. This enabled me to invite students with a range of different attitudes to participate in the interviews. All interviews were recorded for accuracy and students were asked to choose their own pseudonyms for the purposes of anonymisation (see Table 6).

I began the pre-theatre visit interviews by suggesting that if I were to write that everyone in Year 9 loves studying Shakespeare, I would clearly be lying, and therefore I needed to know what the participants really thought; this seemed to encourage them to comment honestly on their experiences of and attitudes towards Shakespeare. I then used a range of techniques recommended for generating data with young people to give them confidence to contribute from a position of knowledge. These included a short vignette and photo elicitation, as well as reference back to their pre-theatre visit questionnaires.

Vignettes are 'short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances, to whose situation the interviewee is invited to respond' (Finch, 1987, p.105). The situation presented to the interviewee should 'be familiar to them, otherwise responses may be artificial' (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014, p.363), and should 'contain sufficient context for respondents to have an understanding about the situation being depicted, but be vague enough to "force" participants to provide additional factors which influence their decisions' (Barter and Renold, 1999, p.4). A vignette also situates an abstract idea within a concrete example, making it more accessible for young people (Hazel, 1995). The vignette used in the pre-theatre visit interviews introduced three main variables for the students to discuss: a cover teacher for a lesson about Shakespeare; a new Shakespeare play; and an imaginative writing exercise (see Appendix IV.ii.i).

Table 6: Interview groups

School	Group	Student Code	Student Pseudonym
Fletcher Comprehensive	Group 1	A011	Leicester
		A081	Zygmunt
		A143	Katie
		A147	London
	Group 2	A020	Bob
		A057	Sam
		A067	Charlie
		A102	Alice
Henslowe Academy	Group 1	B049	Aron
		B089	James
		B138	Ryan
	Group 2	B004	Donny
		B043	Mo
		B175	Akinfenwa
The Massinger School	Group 1	C021	Eleven
		C024	Nerissa
		C067	Katherine
		C109	Skylar
	Group 2	C166	Rosa
		C178	Samantha
		C199	Selena
		C257	Hermione
Dekker High School	Group 1	D027	Angelica
		D062	Ezra
		D126	Jennifer
	Group 2[16]	D003	Alonya
		D012	Aqsa
		D038	Ashley
		D119	Wasima

Different students focused on different elements, providing a range of responses to the vignette, which I discuss in Chapter 4.

I used photo elicitation to ask the students about their preferred classroom setting for studying a Shakespeare play (see Appendix IV.ii.ii). Photo elicitation involves participants being shown one or more photographs to 'invoke, prompt and promote discussion, reflections, comments, observations and memories' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.530). Photographs 'provide visual reassurance when outlining opinions and allow the use of imagination in expanding on the scene' (Hazel, 1995, p.1). The photographs were introduced individually, beginning with the picture of a drama studio as an empty space, followed by the picture of a classroom set out for

[16] This group was the only group not to choose their own pseudonyms, as they ran out of interview time without selecting them.

group work, followed lastly by a classroom set out with desks in rows. This order was deliberate and repeated with all groups to ensure consistency. The comments on the pre-theatre visit questionnaires suggested that using drama activities in the Shakespeare classroom was controversial for the students participating in this research (see section 4.2.4.5), and I therefore expected the photograph of a drama studio to provoke the greatest differences of opinion; sitting in rows seemed to be the most common layout for English classrooms in the schools I visited and therefore might not encourage much debate except in comparison with the other photographs. The students generally responded as I expected, although they may have debated equally whichever photograph had been presented first.

The post-theatre visit interviews were focused on the students' reflections on their experiences during their school trip. Not all students who had participated in the pre-theatre visit interviews were present for the post-theatre visit interviews. This narrowed the range of responses to the play, particularly in Dekker High School, where some students from both interview groups combined into one group to discuss the production; this group was also interviewed several weeks after seeing the play, unlike the groups in the other schools, as a result of other school trips, exams and the school holidays preventing the interviews from going ahead earlier. However, all the data generated for this research were included in the analysis since they still offer a range of student opinions that are important to hear.

Those students who participated in the post-theatre visit interviews were confident and articulate in expressing their opinions about their trip. This may partly have been because they had already met me and had some sense of what the interview would be about. In Henslowe Academy, for example, Akinfenwa reprimanded Mo and Donny for going 'off topic' when they discussed how their parents had signed them up for fencing lessons without their knowledge, demonstrating parental pressure to participate in school activities but also showing how some students imposed their own boundaries on what I would want to hear discussed.

In addition to interviewing students, I conducted one teacher interview in each school, to ask for some context to the school's participation in PSwDB (see Appendix IV.v); in Henslowe Academy, the interview with the Head of English took place in the presence of the Second in Department who also contributed to the discussion. Two teachers chose their own pseudonyms; I was given permission to choose the remainder on their behalf. The teachers all showed a very strong bias in favour of inclusive trips available to a whole year group, and of taking advantage of opportunities such as PSwDB which are free. This bias is important to recognise since it may affect the way that the project is presented to the students, but the range of responses from

those students to Shakespeare and to the theatre visit suggests that they were not unduly influenced by their teachers' views.

3.6.2.3 Observations of students and teachers

Observations of the students during in-school workshops and at Shakespeare's Globe added a third dimension to the data generation process. My focus throughout was on student behaviour in the workshops and at the theatre, noting anything that was of interest rather than having a specific schedule of behaviours decided beforehand. These observations were important to see how the students responded to the different elements of the project '*in situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.456, emphasis in the original). They would then offer a point of comparison for the students' comments on subsequent questionnaires and in interviews, since reflections over time might alter memories of the performances they saw. I attended 9 performances of *Much Ado About Nothing* in total, including the dress rehearsal and first and last schools performances, to see whether the production was changed at all during that time; my observations are detailed in Table 9 on page 136 of this thesis. It was important that I observed all the schools participating in this research as they attended the theatre, so that I could refer back to our shared experiences in the subsequent interviews. This meant that I could not observe all the student workshops at Henslowe Academy, as there was a clash; I observed 6 out of 7 workshops so that I could attend the theatre with students from Fletcher Comprehensive. Since all the workshops I observed were led by the same Globe Education Practitioner (GEP), Adam, and followed almost the same plan, with occasional changes according to how much time was available, I did not believe that missing one would have a significant effect on the overall design of this study.

3.6.2.4 Additional observations and interviews at Shakespeare's Globe

In addition to the data generation undertaken with the schools participating in this research, I observed meetings and interviewed staff at Shakespeare's Globe, to understand PSwDB from the theatre's perspective. I attended a planning meeting between the production's director, Michael Oakley, and Globe Education staff; a continuing professional development (CPD) session for teachers in November 2017; and the training sessions provided for the GEPs in preparation for delivering the in-school workshops. I also interviewed Patrick Spottiswoode, Director of Education at Shakespeare's Globe; director Michael Oakley; Tom Davey, Learning Consultant in charge of facilitating the in-school workshops; and Imogen[17], a volunteer steward. These further

[17] A pseudonym chosen by the volunteer steward for the purposes of anonymity.

observations and interviews provided important information about the creation of the production to meet the perceived needs of its target audience of secondary school students.

3.7 Assessing truth in the data

Silverman suggests, 'we can treat what people tell us in interviews not as either true or false but as socially constructed narratives' (2013, p.47); the same can be said for responses on qualitative questionnaires. The methods described in this chapter generated a large volume of data from young people whose experiences of Shakespeare are socially, culturally and historically situated, and for whom 'Shakespeare' clearly means many different things. Assessing the truth in this data therefore requires an understanding that truth itself is experiential and a social construct (see section 3.2).

In addition, since meaning is attributed to events and experiences only on reflection (Schutz, 1972), it is important to acknowledge that in asking students to complete questionnaires and contribute to group interviews, I may have asked them to reflect on experiences, and therefore attribute meaning to them, that might otherwise have remained meaningless. Sikes comments, 'it is also the case that such things as faulty memory, inadequate vocabulary, partial or erroneous knowledge, and a desire to tell the researcher what it is thought they want to hear, lead to an account which can be shown to be "untrue" but was not given with the deliberate intention of deceiving' (2004, p.22). To counter this, I explicitly asked for honesty at the beginning of each interview (see section 3.6.2.2). Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) in particular seemed to be affected by being interviewed, judging by his anti-Shakespeare comments and his peers' reactions to what he said which suggested he was being extreme, although Mo, in the same interview, commented that he was more honest in the interview than he would have been if his own teacher had asked the same questions, showing that assessing the truth is not easy.

However, Sikes suggests, 'the purpose of qualitative research is often not so much "truth" telling as it is story re-presenting' (2000, p.267); this implies that truth is a positivistic concept and therefore not appropriate for qualitative research. The aim of this research project was to hear the students' voices, telling their experiences of Shakespeare in their own words. Sikes' idea of 'story re-presenting' therefore seems appropriate here.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis involves 'making sense of data in terms of participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p.237). I chose thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) as the most appropriate method for analysing the data generated by this research. Thematic analysis (TA) is defined as 'a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within [qualitative] data' (Braun and

Clarke, 2006, p.79). While some researchers see it as a process within other analytic traditions such as grounded theory (for example Chapman, Hadfield and Chapman, 2015), Braun and Clarke argue that it is 'a method in its own right' that is 'independent of theory and epistemology, and can be applied *across* a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches' (2006, p.78, emphasis in the original). It can be either inductive, developing theory from the data, or deductive, fitting the data to a pre-conceived theory, depending on the research question and strategy. An inductive approach was most appropriate for this study, which explores students' responses to PSwDB without trying to fit their comments into a pre-existing framework.

The approach to TA used in this thesis has six stages, although these stages are overlapping and recursive, rather than a linear process, and should be seen as 'guidelines [...] that will need to be applied flexibly to fit the research questions and data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.86). Table 7 summarises the sources used to generate data during the main study in this research, how those data were analysed, and where the findings from those data are presented in this thesis.

Table 7: Summary of data sources and treatment

Source of data	Transcription required?	Analysis methods	Findings Chapter(s)
Student questionnaire 1	Y	Coding using NVivo 11	4
Student interview 1	Y	Coding using NVivo 11	4
Observations of preparations at Shakespeare's Globe for PSwDB 2018	N	Manual coding	5
Observations of CPD for teachers and in-school student workshops	N	Manual coding	5
Observations of performances	N	Manual coding	5
Interviews with theatre personnel	Y	Manual coding	5
Student questionnaire 2	Y	Coding using NVivo 11	6
Student interview 2	Y	Coding using NVivo 11	6
Teacher interviews	Y	Coding using NVivo 11	4 and 6

3.8.1 Immersion in the data

The first stage of this version of TA is immersion in the data, 'to the extent that you are familiar with the depth and breadth of the content' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.87). Braun and Clarke suggest that this is 'the bedrock for the best of the analysis' (2006, p.87). For my research, this occurred as part of the transcription process; I undertook the transcription of all interviews and

over three quarters of the questionnaires myself, as 'an excellent way to start familiarizing [my]self with the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.87), so that even during the transcription process I began to notice patterns and interesting comments within the data.

Transcription of interviews is problematic because non-verbal data from the original encounter are lost: 'Transcriptions are decontextualized, abstracted from time and space, from the dynamics of the situation, from the live form, and from the social, interactive, dynamic and fluid dimensions of their source; they are frozen' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.426). However, so that the whole data set could be considered in the findings from this research, the questionnaires and interviews needed transcribing, so that they were in a format suitable for use with NVivo 11. NVivo is a CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) programme, designed to help researchers search for themes across large data sets. Table 5 on page 67 shows the volume of data generated in the schools participating in this research; using the software enabled me to compare codes and search for themes in a more efficient way than manual analysis would have done. Examples of a transcribed questionnaire and an extract from a transcribed interview are included in Appendix IX.

Most students wrote their first name on their questionnaires, allowing me to sort them into alphabetical order and to match questionnaire 1 and questionnaire 2 wherever possible. This ensured that all comments could be traced back to their original source and enabled me to compare responses before and after the theatre visit for each student. Each student was given an alpha-numeric reference in order to anonymise the data, beginning with the letter code initially given to their school, followed by a three-digit number, for example A001. Some students had chosen to complete the questionnaires anonymously and these were filed last; I did not attempt to pair anonymous questionnaires. Each student's responses were then transcribed onto a Word document for uploading to NVivo 11. Some questionnaire responses were also entered onto an Excel spreadsheet, to enable some statistical reporting of findings alongside the main body of qualitative data.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim as far as possible, with any unclear speech indicated in the transcript. Laughter, fillers and false starts were included, as these indicated the mood of the interview and the thinking processes of the students. Once the interview transcripts had been checked carefully, participants were anonymised using the names they had chosen during their interviews, before the transcripts were uploaded to NVivo for coding.

Only the field notes written during observations were not transcribed: these were coded manually as they were bounded sets of data, of which only the in-school workshops and theatre observations involved comparison across multiple sets of notes. As I only observed six

workshops and wrote field notes from the theatre observations on the same copy of the script, using a different colour for each observation, these comparisons were straightforward without the need for computerised analysis. In addition, the lived experience of these observations meant that I was already immersed in the data generated, so that transcription was not necessary for that purpose.

3.8.2 Initial coding of the data

Stage two of this version of TA involves initial coding of the data. This is 'the transitional process between data collection and more extensive data analysis' (Saldaña, 2016, p.5), whereby a 'code', a 'researcher-generated construct', is used to attribute 'interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, assertion or proposition development, theory building, and other analytic processes' (Saldaña, 2016, p.4). Braun and Clarke offer the following advice:

a) code for as many potential themes/patterns as possible [...] you never know what might be interesting later;
b) code extracts of data inclusively [...] a common criticism of coding is that the context is lost; and
c) remember that you can code individual extracts of data in as many different 'themes' as they fit into – so an extract may be uncoded, coded once, or coded many times as relevant. (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.89)

This process inevitably results in a long list of codes which can then be reviewed as part of stage three.

The use of Nvivo meant that I could start coding several times until I found a way that suited the large quantity of data. Initially I started with individual questionnaires. However, I realised that I would get a better sense of the data if I were to code each question across all the questionnaires. The software enabled me to auto-code the questionnaires according to question number, grouping all responses to each question together, giving me a greater sense of what the students were saying as a cohort in response to a particular question as well as individually. For each question, responses were explored in detail, a process that 'helps you to focus attention on the text rather than on your preconceptions' (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p.72). This process would therefore help to counter some of the potential bias arising from my researcher positionality (see section 3.4). Interviews were coded after the coding of the questionnaires had been completed.

3.8.3 Searching for themes

Stage three begins once all the data have been coded. This stage begins to look for combinations of codes that might develop into a broader theme. One suggestion is to do this through visual representations, such as mind-maps or tables, to see how groups of codes might fit together (Braun and Clarke, 2006). These themes are not final, but offer a sense of what is significant in the data and what is less important. Saldaña calls this 'second cycle coding', where 'your first cycle codes and (and their associated coded data) are reorganized and reconfigured to eventually develop a smaller and more select list of broader categories, themes, concepts, and/or assertions' (2016, p.234). A hierarchy with codes, sub-themes and themes becomes clearer, in preparation for stage four.

The volume of codes that resulted from the initial coding of my data resulted in some duplications where responses to different questions had elicited answers that contained related content. There were also similar codes created from the analysis of the interview data which needed to be added to the questionnaire data. Codes were therefore merged in Nvivo so that during the writing up process all the data relating to each idea could be found under one code. As part of this review of codes and early development of themes, I also wrote draft reports of my findings. Producing the report is the sixth stage of TA; however, writing at this stage of the process helped me to develop my understanding of the themes becoming evident through the initial coding process. This writing process also suggested that the structure of this thesis should track the experiences of the students whose opinions are expressed here by presenting their pre-theatre visit attitudes towards Shakespeare first, then exploring the development of PSwDB and their reactions to it in the moment of seeing the production, followed by their post-theatre visit reflections. Overarching themes could then be drawn out in an ensuing discussion chapter (see Chapter 7).

3.8.4 Reviewing themes

Stage four of this version of TA requires the researcher to review the themes developed in stage three, through re-reading and recoding data to ensure that all relevant data are included in each theme, and that the data are coherent. Some themes may need to be discarded, combined or divided as a result of this review. The themes themselves must then be reviewed in the light of the whole data set, so that the researcher sees clearly 'what your different themes are, how they fit together, and the overall story they tell about the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.92).

I undertook further recoding and merging of codes as a result of the writing exercise I undertook during stage three, which helped me to reorder the themes and to begin to develop my research story. As part of this process I created a mind-map and then a flow-chart on paper for each of

the three findings chapters I intended to write, using a piece of adhesive paper for each theme so that I could move and reorder them until they fitted together in a coherent narrative. This enabled me to see further instances of repeated or associated themes, and by comparing it to the code list on Nvivo I could also identify sub-themes that I had missed. I also redrafted my writing to take account of this further analysis. This stage was cyclical, and involved revisiting the data several times and reorganising the codes to ensure that the most important themes were emphasised. To support this development of themes, and as a result of the volume of data, I undertook some simple quantitative data analysis: this would offer statistical evidence for the importance of the qualitative data I had chosen to foreground in the final report.

3.8.5 Quantitative analysis

The volume of data generated by this study included some tick-box questions, for example question 3 on questionnaire 1, concerned with activities undertaken in Shakespeare lessons, and question 2 on questionnaire 2, concerned with levels of knowledge of *Much Ado About Nothing* before the theatre visit. In addition, questions such as question 4 on questionnaire 2, which asked students whether they had enjoyed the performance, were answered with 'yes', 'no', 'yes and no' or 'don't know' by the majority of students. These responses could be counted to provide statistical evidence to support the selected qualitative data reported in the findings chapters, to demonstrate the prevalence of any particular point of view amongst the students. The use of an Excel spreadsheet enabled the totalling of each type of response and also the comparison of different responses, such has how many students stated that there was nothing in Shakespeare that they could relate to in their own lives, in response to question 11 on questionnaire 1, but who then could find messages for young people in the production they watched, in response to question 10 on questionnaire 2. It was not my intention to conduct a mixed-methods research project. However, these statistics provide additional valuable evidence for the themes drawn out from the data during the qualitative analysis process.

3.8.6 Defining and naming themes

Stage five of this version of TA involves ensuring that the data in each theme represent 'a coherent and internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.92). Each theme must also fit into the overall story of the research in response to the research question, avoiding overlaps and repetition. For my research, this stage involved working inductively from the themes defined in stage four, to define the overarching themes that would form my discussion chapter. The previous four stages of TA and the quantitative analysis had involved intensive immersion in the data; stage five required me to draw back from

the individual codes and to consider 'the broader overall "story"' of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.92).

3.8.7 Producing the report

The sixth stage of this version of TA involves producing the final report of the work done in the previous five stages. The write-up must give 'a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story the data tell – within and across themes' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.93). The recursive nature of TA means that writing can be an integral part of the whole process, and this was an important element of each stage during this project. A key part of responding to the research question was to explore the students' own comments about studying Shakespeare and about the theatre visit. Writing up these findings separately from the over-arching themes was therefore an important part of producing the final report. The discussion chapter then drew on data from all three findings chapters to explore the four key themes that I chose as the most important from this study.

3.9 Reflections on the research methodology

Overall, the methodology and methods chosen for this research project have resulted in a detailed and valuable study of students' experiences of Shakespeare before and during a performance at Shakespeare's Globe, and of their reflections on that experience of live performance afterwards. The focus on student voice was enabled by generation of largely qualitative data, with some quantitative data analysis used to support the qualitative findings.

The pilot study provided important evidence for developing suitable research methods for the main study; trialling the main study questionnaires with young people also provided important feedback. However, responses to some questions demonstrated that however carefully tools are prepared, questions can be misunderstood: this was particularly evident with question 6 on questionnaire 2, where a small number of students wrote about not being able to use their own mobile phones during their theatre visit, rather than commenting on the use of mobile phones in the production. In addition, and more importantly, question 14 on questionnaire 2 was a complex question that needed breaking down to ask about choosing to go to the theatre and paying for a ticket separately; on reflection, these questions should have been asked on questionnaire 1 to avoid responses being influenced by the theatre visit itself.

As a teacher myself, my methods also tried to take into account my position as an outsider and the influence that that might have on the students in the group interviews. I have acknowledged my own bias and tried to allow for my personal assumptions about Shakespeare in schools through the use of thematic analysis, since the detailed focus on the students' words that this method requires, particularly in stages one and two, immerses the researcher in the data and

sets aside those preconceived ideas. Using Nvivo enabled me to include all the data generated by the questionnaires, interviews and observations, with over 800 participants in total. This data set offers a perspective on experiences of Shakespeare among young people that is unusual because of its size. The methodology and methods described in this chapter have therefore ensured that this research is an important addition to studies of Shakespeare in education in England.

4 Experiences of Shakespeare before the theatre visit

> Love goes toward love as school boys from their books,
> But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
>
> *Romeo and Juliet* (2.1.201-202)

4.1 Introduction

This is the first of three chapters presenting the findings of this research. It seeks to answer the first two research sub-questions listed in Chapter 1:

> What are students' attitudes towards and experiences of Shakespeare prior to attending the PSwDB production at Shakespeare's Globe?
>
> and
>
> How is the theatre visit framed for, to and by the students who attend?

The findings in this chapter come predominantly from analysis of the students' pre-theatre-visit questionnaires and interviews; some students referred back to these ideas in their post-show interviews, and relevant comments from the teachers are also included here.

The students' comments explored in this chapter demonstrate that their attitudes to Shakespeare are varied and nuanced, as a result of a complex interplay of beliefs, expectations and experiences. Diverse social, cultural and educational contexts inform these students' varied attitudes, although most encounter Shakespeare first as part of the school curriculum. This chapter therefore begins by exploring the students' experiences of Shakespeare in school. Experiences of Shakespeare beyond school, particularly within families, also influence the students' attitudes, and these are explored next. The students' expectations for a live performance of a Shakespeare play offer further insights into their attitudes towards Shakespeare before seeing the Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) production. How teachers have framed the visit to Shakespeare's Globe for and to their students also influences these attitudes.

Each student who completed one or both questionnaires was given an alphanumeric code, beginning with the letter originally used to identify each school, followed by a three-digit number starting from 001, in alphabetical order of first name (see section 3.7.2). Quotations from questionnaires are as written by the students, including spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

4.2 Experiences of Shakespeare at school

Many of the students in this research expressed attitudes towards Shakespeare that were clearly based on their experiences in the classroom. Student B077 wrote:

> Maybe it's the teachers I've had, maybe it's me but in all his play's I have only liked one which was hamlett, The rest are just boring to me because I've done so much work on him I want something new.

This reflective comment offers some context for the accusation that Shakespeare is 'boring': student B077 recognises that the role of the teacher is important in lessons about Shakespeare but that he shares responsibility for his attitude towards studying the plays. His comment also shows that he is aware of how the curriculum affects his attitude through its apparent imbalance caused by its emphasis on compulsory Shakespeare (see section 1.2); his liking of *Hamlet* demonstrates the importance of text choice in schools. His other comments on questionnaire 1 showed a similar tendency to negativity, based on his school experiences. He described his previous studies of *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as 'boring and stale', and wrote that 'forcing me to act out a scene doesn't help my learning it just annoys me and discourages me', underlining how what happens in lessons reinforces his negative attitude. He commented, 'We <u>once</u> watched a DVD and that was sadly the most I learned about Shakespeare, the rest was me going out of my way to revise him myself' (emphasis in the original). This private revision included speaking about Shakespeare to his older sister, who studied *Macbeth* for her English Literature GCSE, showing a willingness to engage with and develop his own understanding of the plays. He had also seen a production of *Twelfth Night* at the National Theatre in London with his school, suggesting an openness to experiencing Shakespeare beyond lessons, although attendance at this performance may have resulted from parental pressure, a factor mentioned by his peers in their interviews. Other than his comment about enjoying *Hamlet,* his first questionnaire is dominated by negative reflections, culminating with the comment that he can 'not particularly' see anything in Shakespeare's plays that he can relate to his own life.

I have focused on this student's pre-theatre-visit questionnaire in some detail to demonstrate how the school context in which the plays are studied directly affects many learners' attitudes towards Shakespeare. Student B077 has a supportive home environment, with a sister who has been prepared to talk about her own studies of Shakespeare and parents who have facilitated participation in a school theatre trip to see a Shakespeare play. His liking of *Hamlet* shows recognition that Shakespeare can be enjoyable, although he did not state what it was about this play that he particularly enjoyed or how he had encountered it. However, his use of the word 'boring' twice on this questionnaire would appear to confirm more generalised views of

students' opinions about studying the plays (see section 2.4), and his school lessons appear to have been the dominant context in which his negative attitude developed. Comments from other students in this study also show how important the classroom experience is in forming their attitudes towards Shakespeare.

4.2.1 The attitude of the group towards studying Shakespeare

Much of the literature concerned with teaching Shakespeare assumes that all students approach studying Shakespeare's plays in school with a negative attitude (see section 2.4). Some of the students interviewed for this research spoke on behalf of their peers in a similarly generalised manner. London[18] (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me that 'most people have the same opinions about how they don't really like it', and Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) told me that 'no-one really cares about Shakespeare any more'. London's 'most people' and Akinfenwa's 'no-one' perhaps show that these students saw their role in interviews as representing their peers, with an expectation that a generalised viewpoint was required. However, London recognised that such generalisations are problematic. He commented, 'I'm not sure […] if my friends just say that sometimes', showing his awareness that group attitudes are not always accurate representations of what individuals in those groups may believe.

While the interviewees expressed these views to me as an outsider, the need to maintain a good relationship with their teacher clearly takes precedence over speaking honestly about Shakespeare in the classroom. Mo (Henslowe Academy) said:

> I don't want to say to a teacher "I hate what you're teaching us" because they wouldn't respond very well so people just say they like it cause then if they were all in this [interview] situation they'd probably say "it's really bad".

Again there is an expectation here that 'all' share the same opinion. Akinfenwa links this directly to a perceived lack of relevance of Shakespeare to the students' own lives, saying that they see Shakespeare as 'irrelevant in the modern day'. However, as the example of student B077 has shown, this generalisation ignores the complexity of the students' attitudes which arise from a variety of social, cultural and educational contexts.

Some students at The Massinger School told me that while negative views are commonly expressed, possibly even expected, they can be quickly altered by the experience of studying a Shakespeare play. Nerissa said:

> If our teacher told us that we're going to be doing Shakespeare next term everyone in the class would be like "oh I don't like Shakespeare" but then when we read the play they actually get into it and they enjoy it.

[18] Interviewees chose their own pseudonyms for this research (see Section 3.7.2).

Her use of 'everyone' echoes London's 'most people', but unlike his hesitant suggestion that this might not be the truth, Nerissa confidently expects that classroom study will bring enjoyment and has the potential to change students' attitudes.

Katherine (The Massinger School) suggested that Shakespeare's name implies 'grand text […] really difficult', but that 'when you actually read the text or when you watched the film I think it gets rid of that barrier of his name', in agreement with Nerissa. While student B077 had his negative attitude confirmed by his experiences of studying Shakespeare, these students believe that their experiences in the classroom have changed their views from negative to positive. This suggests that a student's school context has a strong influence on attitudes towards studying Shakespeare, with the potential to change attitudes as well as to reinforce them.

4.2.2 Admiration for Shakespeare

Over 100 students wrote about Shakespeare's reputation as a playwright, which most of them appeared to agree was well-deserved. Student D089 wrote that Shakespeare is 'a famous writer who's work has been made into iconic plays', and student B115 called him 'Englands best writer, the father of writing'. Other students called Shakespeare 'revolutionary' (A007), 'a legend or a genius' (A027), 'our key to literature' (A181), and 'a man with amazing ideas and stories' (Jennifer, Dekker High School). These are not descriptions of Shakespeare that have often been attributed to school students, and suggest that these students have developed a view of Shakespeare as a culturally important figure, possibly encouraged by what they have heard at school and/or at home.

Several students wrote that Shakespeare is an inspiration to them. Student C124 wrote:

> He is an amazing writer with extrodinary knowledge. He is extremely detailed and his books contains many different and interesting genres. Some also have plot twists and change in theme. Overall it is a huge inspiration & definetatly someone who I look up to.

This effusive comment suggests a genuine admiration for Shakespeare's work, in particular his crafting of the plays with the references to 'detail', 'plot twists' and 'theme'. For student C177, Shakespeare is the inspiration for writing her own poetry, suggesting that studying the plays also encourages creativity. Student C162 also wrote that Shakespeare inspires her, adding that 'although I don't really like English, I like his plays a lot'. Her attitude towards the plays is not affected by her dislike of the English curriculum, unlike other students in this study.

Some students acknowledged Shakespeare's success as a writer, suggesting that 'Shakespeare is a excellent playwriter because every play had so much success' (C150), and that he was 'A great Poet, who wrote engaging plays that are still played out to this day' (B179). Student A126

commented, 'I think of world-class plays because I know that he was a famous playwrighte even studied in other countries'. Others wrote, 'He has changed our way of thinking about certain things' (A074), and he 'changed the english language, and […] has impacted everyones lives in one way or another' (A096). This focus on the popularity, longevity and impact of Shakespeare's work demonstrates the variety of aspects of his plays that these students regard as admirable, although it is not always clear how they formed these opinions.

4.2.3 Enjoyment of Shakespeare

Admiration for Shakespeare seems to be closely connected to a positive attitude towards studying Shakespeare at school. Several students suggested that Shakespeare is 'fun' (A190), 'interesting' (A205), exciting (C106), intriguing (D145) and 'makes me feel happy' (C267). Some students had favourite plays. *Romeo and Juliet* was mentioned most frequently, but others included *Hamlet* (A141) and *Twelfth Night* (B057). Most of the students I interviewed at The Massinger School had clearly enjoyed studying *The Merchant of Venice*, with Skylar suggesting that the roles of Portia and Nerissa show that 'a woman can do anything a man can do', and some of the students at Fletcher Comprehensive indicated that the twists and turns of the trial scene in this play had caught their attention. Skylar's comment implies that her study of *The Merchant of Venice* had focused in part on gender roles in society, offering an example of relevance to her; she was one of the few students who could see how Shakespeare might still be regarded as *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (Kott, 1967).

Most often the students' excitement related to the stories, as the reactions to studying *The Merchant of Venice* indicate. Comments such as 'I really like the story line' (C089) and 'The story as a whole keeps you sitting at the edge of your seat until the end' (C210) demonstrate this clearly. Several students referred to reading Shakespeare's 'books', suggesting that this is their usual experience of the plays: 'I enjoy reading his works' (D118), and 'When I hear the word "Shakespeare" I feel like I want to read his books' (D032). These comments suggest that sitting reading the plays is not necessarily a negative experience; they also imply the presence of an intrinsic motivation to engage with Shakespeare, contrary to the more generalised attitudes discussed in section 2.4.

Some students acknowledged the difficulty of Shakespeare's plays, but appeared to see this as a positive attribute, suggesting that the language is not a barrier but a challenge to be embraced. Hermione (The Massinger School) wrote on questionnaire 1:

> When I hear the word "Shakespeare" I immediately feel interested and excited because Shakespeare is a really complex writer and his plays are tough to understand. It's really fun to study them and their historical background and I'm excited to be doing them.

The description of Shakespeare as 'complex' and 'tough' chimes with more negative views of the plays, but Hermione equates them with 'fun'. When I asked her to explain this comment in the pre-theatre visit interview, she told me that 'it makes you feel quite clever to be able to know what [the words] mean and how they're used in the plays', showing that, for her, meeting the challenge of the language brings a sense of achievement.

Past experiences of studying Shakespeare clearly helps to develop some students' confidence. Bob (Fletcher Comprehensive) commented, 'once you've read the first book and analysed it it was like a lot easier […] now when I see Shakespeare I'm not that like as worried I guess', and James (Henslowe Academy), told me, 'the language can sometimes be complicated but I seem like I can understand it more every time we do Shakespeare'. Engaging with the story can also counteract some difficulties with the words: 'I don't feel very interested, because I don't understand the words in the play and because of how old it is […] But sometimes the plays are intriguing and they have a twist in it' (C123). This is not true for all students, however: Rosa (The Massinger School) commented, 'the way the words is layed out in a sentence sometimes doesn't make sense to me. I just give up on trying to understand'. Language difficulties result in students getting 'worried' (C045) and 'nervous' (C058), since there are 'really difficult words that sometimes makes sense and sometimes don't' (A105). It is not clear why some students 'give up' like Rosa and why some develop confidence as Shakespeare's language becomes more familiar to them, like James, but I would suggest that the activities undertaken in lessons and the students' relationships with their teachers are important influences on these attitudes (see section 4.2.4 below). These responses also need to be set against comments from other students who say that they have studied too much Shakespeare.

Bob (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me that his teacher had openly discussed with his class the idea that they might be put off 'because of this being Shakespeare'. It seems that by explicitly addressing negative attitudes towards Shakespeare, this teacher had enabled some students to move towards enjoying studying the plays, even if they were still hesitant to admit this to me. The choice of play and the activities undertaken in the classroom also clearly affect students' attitudes towards studying Shakespeare, but not all students could articulate why their attitudes had shifted. Perhaps Katherine (The Massinger School) offered some insight when she commented, 'it all honestly depends on my mood', citing time of day and level of tiredness as influential factors in her engagement with her lessons. This suggests that her attitude to Shakespeare is dependent as much on the immediate circumstances of the lesson as on her prior experiences of Shakespeare.

4.2.4 Experiences of Shakespeare in school lessons

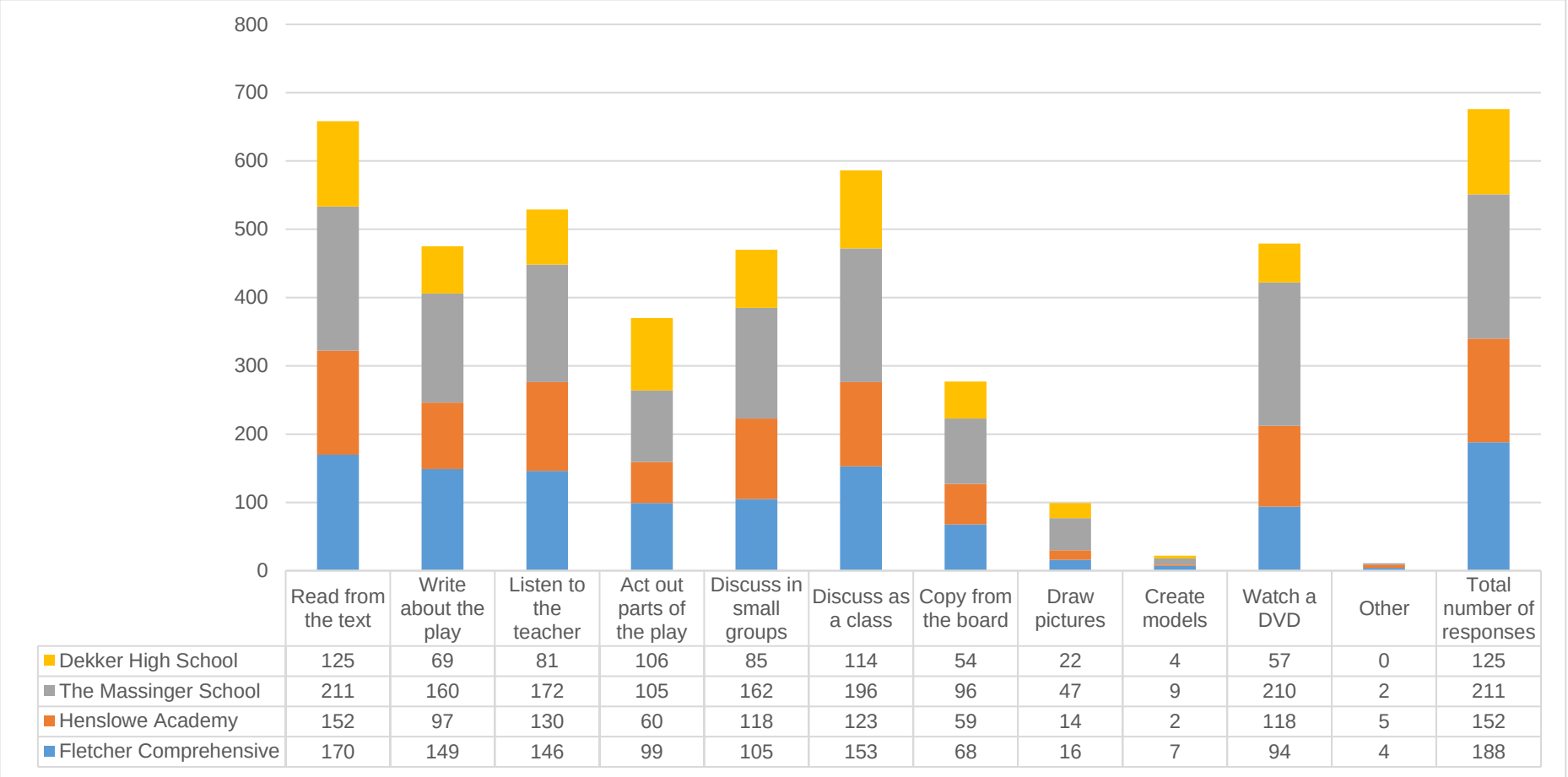
Bob's teacher mentioned above is clearly aware of how he can influence students' perceptions of Shakespeare as they study the plays. The choice of play and the lesson activities are also important to the students, and their questionnaire responses about what helps and does not help them to study Shakespeare offer important insights into both what happens in lessons and how those activities are framed for the students.

Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix IV.i) offered students a range of ten activities that might take place in their lessons about Shakespeare, with the eleventh option of 'other' and space to write what that 'other' activity might have been. The data generated are shown in Chart 1 and highlight the activities that are memorable for each student, rather than offering a true representation of everything that occurs in the classroom, since there are clear inconsistencies in some answers. The activities listed are all ones that I have used when teaching, although not necessarily when teaching Shakespeare. The students' responses provide an insight into the culture within each school's English department, with reading from the text being used frequently in all four schools, shown by the generally high response rate, but with much greater variations in the use of DVDs in the classroom. Similarly, class discussions were a common experience for these students, but acting out parts of the play was less common in some schools than in others.

Teachers' values and teaching style may also be reflected in these responses. If a teacher most values reading from the text and writing about the play, more time will be spent on these two activities than on others, and therefore they are more likely to be remembered by the students who undertake them. The focus on reading and writing may also reflect the positioning of Shakespeare within the reading requirements of the National Curriculum and the requirement for a written response to that reading as part of the GCSE English Literature examination taken by most students at the end of Year 11 (see section 1.2).

Most students' comments suggest that lesson activities should be directly related to writing an essay, in preparation for GCSE examinations. As Chart 1 shows, few students added an 'other' activity to the list offered. Of those that did, very few were entirely different from the other activities listed. Three students from Fletcher Comprehensive wrote that they watch clips of films in school, not having ticked the 'Watch a DVD' option, clearly differentiating between seeing a whole filmed version of a play and only seeing short extracts. Students in The Massinger School included 'Answer question' (C032) and 'Read the play as a class' (C043), suggesting that they interpreted the options of 'Discuss as a class' and 'Read from the text' more narrowly than other students may have done. Student B029 also included 'homework' as an 'other' activity.

Chart 1: Activities undertaken in lessons when studying Shakespeare



	Read from the text	Write about the play	Listen to the teacher	Act out parts of the play	Discuss in small groups	Discuss as a class	Copy from the board	Draw pictures	Create models	Watch a DVD	Other	Total number of responses
Dekker High School	125	69	81	106	85	114	54	22	4	57	0	125
The Massinger School	211	160	172	105	162	196	96	47	9	210	2	211
Henslowe Academy	152	97	130	60	118	123	59	14	2	118	5	152
Fletcher Comprehensive	170	149	146	99	105	153	68	16	7	94	4	188

The remaining answers showed more variety. Two students at Henslowe Academy referred to drama workshops facilitated by visitors to the school; one referred to 'Quizes' (B051), and student B165 wrote that the students 'write our own', presumably referring to creative writing exercises based on the Shakespeare play being studied. Student A074 wrote that she had also had to 'Do presentations' in Shakespeare lessons.

The limited number of 'other' responses suggests that activities such as drama workshops and presentations, which it must be assumed were undertaken by more than one or two students, do not figure regularly enough in lessons to be remembered more generally. It may also suggest that students did not reflect on the variety of activities undertaken during lessons when answering this question; lesson observations, which were not part of this study's methodology, would be one way of verifying what activities do take place in the Shakespeare classroom.

According to the students I interviewed, each school participating in this research introduces a new topic each half term in English lessons, working towards a written assessment at the end of that topic. A Shakespeare play is therefore studied for six or seven weeks before the students demonstrate their learning through writing an analytic essay. Some students reflected on the pace of lessons as one element that had affected how much they had enjoyed studying Shakespeare. Student B027 wrote that Shakespeare is 'quite boring in my opinion. Its very slow pace and not very apealing', and student C063 commented that it is 'something horror, that goes on forever'. Donny and Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) disagreed over the best approach: Donny told me that 'it's a lot better if the lessons are a faster pace' as 'people lose focus' otherwise, but Akinfenwa said that this would be more difficult for students because 'you wouldn't be able to digest any information'. Aqsa (Dekker High School) said that 'instead of just like going through and analysing it I would prefer like just to read it all and then maybe at the end go through everything'. This solution would enable students to follow the plot through to its conclusion without feeling the need to understand every word in the text.

However, understanding every word is seen as essential by some students in preparation for assessment, particularly looking ahead to GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11. Mo (Henslowe Academy) told me that 'we have to analyse every meaning of every sentence in tests […] so we have to understand every word and what it means in the whole play'. This is a misunderstanding of how knowledge of Shakespeare's plays is assessed (see section 1.2), but perhaps explains why so many students in this study are concerned about understanding the language. Student C040 wrote on questionnaire 1 that the word 'Shakespeare' causes 'Dread as it is very stressfull […] We have to rember quotes, speeches what happens. and if I don't rember

it I am going to fail'. This student focuses on memory of quotes and of plot rather than understanding the language, but her concern about failing assessments mirrors the concern expressed by Mo and his peers in their interview. Donny (Henslowe Academy) told me that to achieve success in assessments, 'everything really depends on the teacher'.

4.2.4.1 The role of the teacher in studying Shakespeare

The relationship with the teacher is clearly important to the students in this study. Bob's comment discussed in section 4.2.3 recognises the teacher as encourager, and for some students, listening to the teacher in lessons is a key activity that supports their learning, even though others sometimes find it 'boring and not beneficial' (B073). Mo's comment discussed in section 4.2.1 also suggests that the relationship between student and teacher must be consciously managed, to ensure the best outcome for the student. This relationship was highlighted by some students commenting on the vignette used in their pre-theatre visit interviews (see Appendix IV.ii).

English teachers appear to be seen as experts by their students, particularly in relation to texts with difficult language or unfamiliar stories. Several students wrote that 'Teacher summarising the stories' (A121) and 'when the teacher explains some words we don't understand' (A161) helped them, underlining the importance of the teacher role to these students. James (Henslowe Academy) told me that 'there's quite a few words or parts of it that I need to go through with my teacher to understand what they mean fully', and Katherine (The Massinger School) told me that even when watching a filmed version of a Shakespeare play, the teacher is a key part of the process: 'they've read the text, they know what's happening, so they highlight and emphasise on whichever part of the film is important'.

The vignette used in the pre-theatre visit interview includes a cover teacher introducing a new Shakespeare play. The students' responses suggest that they value their teachers' expertise and do not expect a cover teacher to also have that knowledge. Rosa (The Massinger School) said, 'they don't really understand it themselves so they just leave us to do the work ourselves, and we don't understand it so we just give up'. This causes a negative reaction from the English teacher later, who 'gets annoyed that we didn't do any of the work', which contributes to her frustration with studying Shakespeare. This suggests that teachers need to be very careful when deciding on tasks for cover lessons to ensure that students are able to achieve some success. For Ryan (Henslowe Academy), the relationship between teacher and student is also important for the success of a lesson: he said that students would be disruptive if a cover teacher walked in, 'because like the teachers don't really know them' and therefore would not be able to control their behaviour. These comments suggest that most students see their English teachers as Shakespeare experts that cannot be easily replaced, and who know their students well and

therefore understand what those students need in order to be successful in lessons and in assessments.

4.2.4.2 Play choice

The choice of play for study in school also appears to affect students' enjoyment of Shakespeare in the classroom. Table 8 shows the plays listed by students as having been studied in school. This includes all plays named by 20 or more students, which may indicate a text choice by one teacher for an English or Drama class; many students in Fletcher Comprehensive stated that they had studied Shakespeare in Drama lessons as well as in English lessons, which may have been why Katie wrote on questionnaire 1, 'I feel like I've heard the word Shakespeare too much and that I don't want to talk about him'. The statistics show the numbers of students who listed each play, suggesting that different classes within the year group may have studied different plays. The entire cohort of Year 9 students at Henslowe Academy had begun studying *Much Ado About Nothing* by the time of their visit to Shakespeare's Globe for the PSwDB 2018 production. Some had also studied Shakespeare in primary school but it was not always clear whether the plays they listed on questionnaire 1 included those encountered in primary school.

Table 8: Plays studied in school according to student responses to questionnaire 1

	Fletcher Comprehensive (cohort: 209 students)	Henslowe Academy (cohort: 180 students)	The Massinger School (cohort: 270 students)	Dekker High School (cohort: 177 students)	Total (cohort: 836 students)
A Midsummer Night's Dream		132	26	125	283
Hamlet	63				63
Julius Caesar	116				116
Macbeth	119	34	112	35	300
Much Ado About Nothing			145		145
Othello	85		21		106
Romeo and Juliet	20		188	56	264
The Merchant of Venice	158		100	125	383
Twelfth Night		125			125

There are several reasons why students may have studied different plays. Teachers may have been permitted to choose which play they taught, according to their own preferences or to what they deemed appropriate for their classes. Availability of copies of the text may also have been an influential factor (Elliott, 2017). However, even accounting for teachers' preferences and the availability of texts, it would seem that some schools do not review what students are studying over their whole school career, leading to a very limited experience of Shakespeare. A genre bias was particularly evident in Henslowe Academy, where most student had only studied Shakespeare's comedies. It seems that students' attitudes to learning are directly affected by their teachers' choice of play, although it is not clear in these schools how those plays were chosen.

4.2.4.3 Activities that support or inhibit learning

The students were asked which classroom activities were helpful to them when studying Shakespeare, and which were unhelpful. Some activities were clearly more popular, for example watching DVDs. However, these activities need to be seen within the context of each school. Although watching a DVD was the most popular activity overall, the individual schools show some variation: approximately 50% of students in Henslowe Academy and The Massinger School listed this as a helpful activity, but only about 25% of students in Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School did so. When considered alongside the number of students who listed this as a lesson activity shown in Chart 1, the statistics suggest that students in Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School are much less accustomed to watching DVDs when studying Shakespeare's plays, and are therefore less likely to see this as a helpful activity.

Many students listed activities without giving reasons why those activities are helpful. Some, however, showed a clear preference for particular activities which they say help them to understand the story and language of the play. Statistically, according to the students who answered this question, reading from the text was the second most helpful activity after watching a DVD, followed by acting out parts of the play, discussing as a class and discussing in groups (see Chart 2 and 3). As watching DVDs and using drama to teach Shakespeare are contested activities in the literature (see section 2.4), these are discussed in more detail below. The dominance of reading as a lesson activity, however, suggests that this is the most common way that students encounter Shakespeare in the classroom.

Fewer students across all four schools commented on activities that are not helpful to them when studying Shakespeare, suggesting a possible reluctance to criticise teachers in line with Mo's comment discussed in section 4.2.1 (see Charts 4 and 5). Again, many students listed the

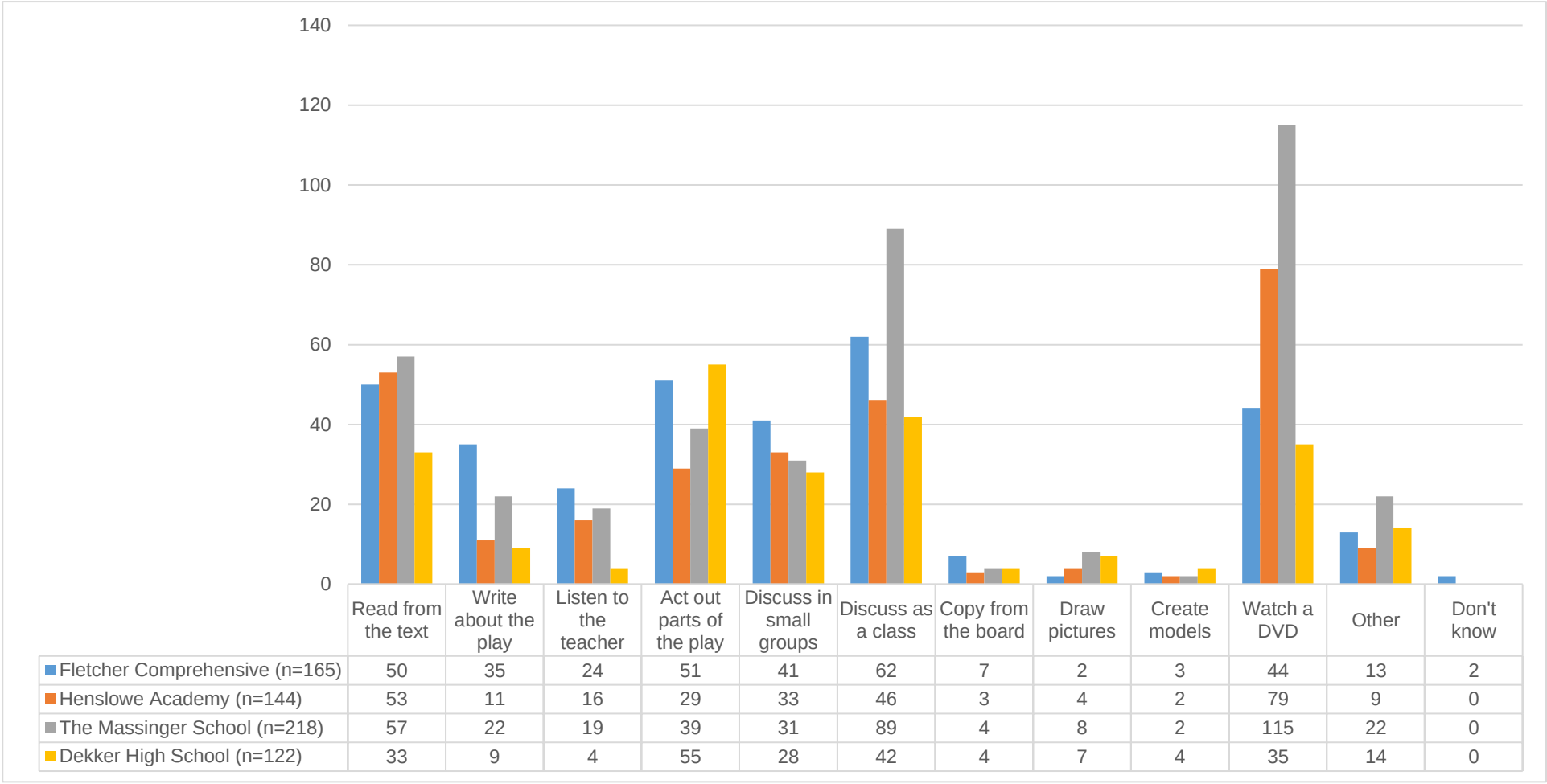
activities that they find unhelpful without giving reasons. Others suggested that some activities are a waste of time (A023) and do not help with writing essays or sitting examinations (B037).

Copying from the board was deemed the most unhelpful activity in all four schools. A few students wrote that this is a helpful activity, allowing them to 'look over your notes' (Eleven, The Massinger School), and others qualified their responses, writing 'we rarely do' (A058) and 'which is hardly ever' (A139). For most, however, copying is unhelpful because it is a passive activity: it is 'boring' (B050), 'repeatative' (B099), 'unnecessary' (C034) and 'it doesn't actually make me think' (C013). Creative activities such as drawing and building models were not valued by the students in this research either. Creativity 'doesn't expand your knowledge' (A094), and student A160 added, 'I think we just do it to keep our attention and not get bored', while student C126 commented, 'it isn't really linked to Shakespeare'. These comments suggest that students like to understand a clear rationale for the activities undertaken in lessons, particularly when those activities do not seem to involve transmission of knowledge.

Far more important to students were whole class discussions. The students' comments here emphasised the importance of learning with and from their peers as well as their teacher. Student A066 wrote, 'When we discuss as a class about the play it helps me more because some of the ideas I couldn't think about could be said by other members of the class' and student B051 commented, 'we can feed of each other', acknowledging that working together pushes each student to achieve more than would be possible alone. This shared knowledge helps students to 'understand the text in more depth' (C014) and also helps to counter misinterpretation of the text (Ryan, Henslowe Academy). Discussions 'help me get engaged' in contrast with 'hearing the teacher talk about it because that's boring and I get distracted' (Ashley, Dekker High School). The need to defend one's own point of view is as important as hearing the opinions of others: 'getting other peoples point of view can make yours stronger and maybe change' (D120), showing how important discussion can be for developing an understanding of the play being studied. As a by-product, discussion 'adapts your idea and improves confidence and key skills like debating' (B179).

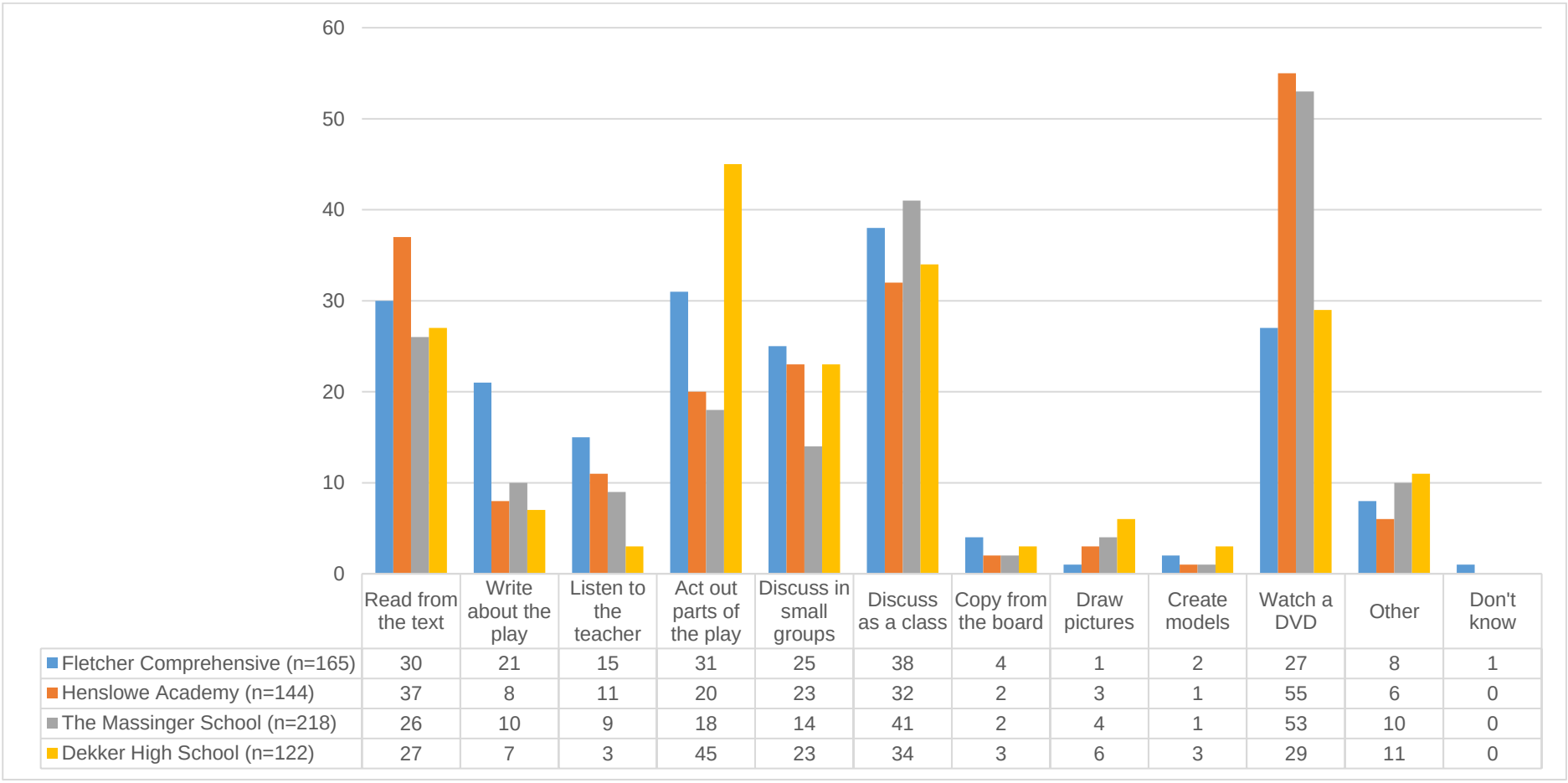
Small group discussions were valued by fewer students than whole class discussions, as there is less teacher control. Most common was the view that 'discussing in small groups can get very distracting scince people tend to go off topic' (Sam, Fletcher Comprehensive). It is also 'too loud and I can't think' (A125), and 'some people don't contribute their ideas' (B010), 'leaving 1 person to do all the work' (Eleven, The Massinger School). Student C052 also commented, 'we might not have enough knowledge to make guesses correctly and in turn, get questions wrong'. This offers further evidence that the students rely heavily on their teachers to transmit "correct" knowledge and to discipline the class.

Chart 2: Activities that support student learning about Shakespeare (number of responses)



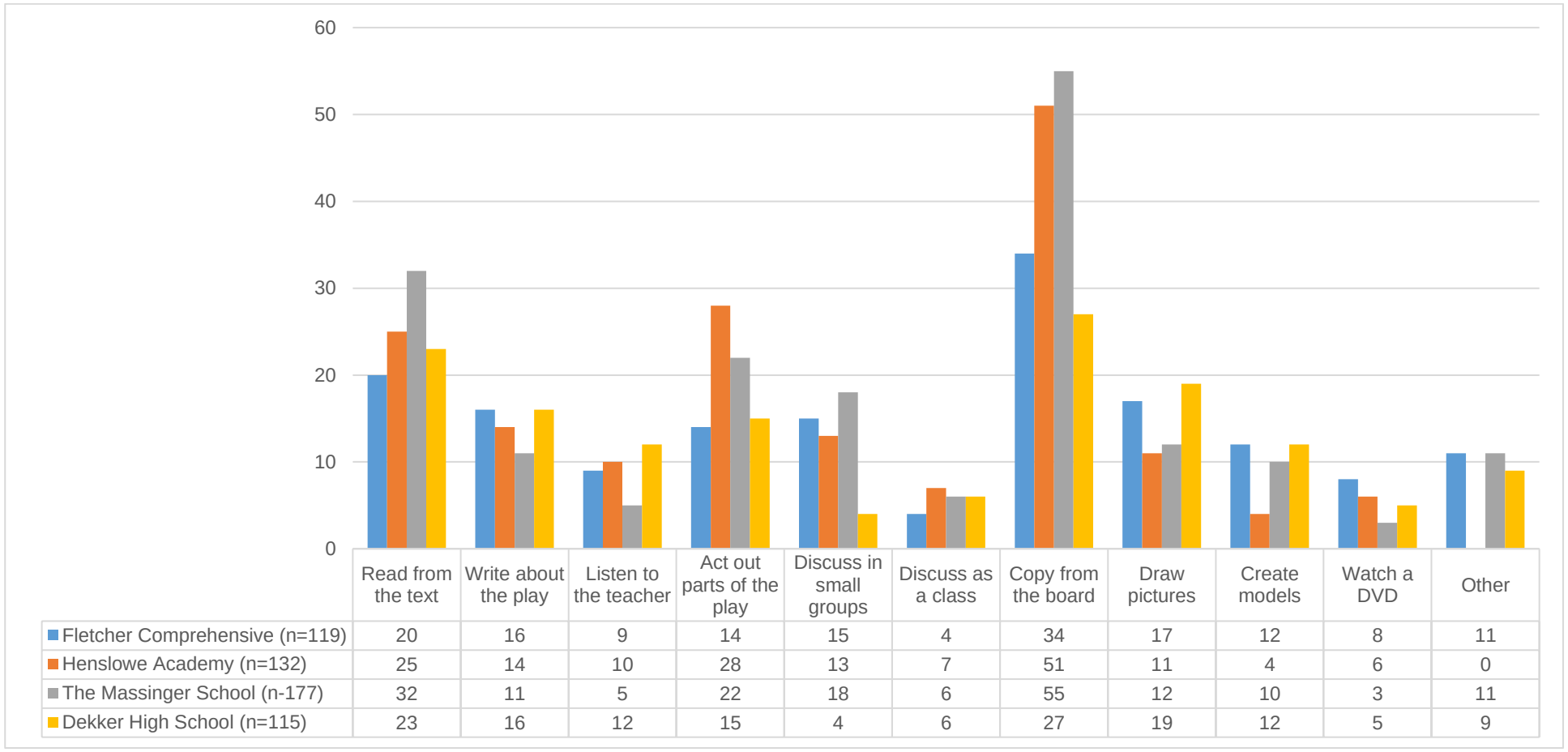
	Read from the text	Write about the play	Listen to the teacher	Act out parts of the play	Discuss in small groups	Discuss as a class	Copy from the board	Draw pictures	Create models	Watch a DVD	Other	Don't know
Fletcher Comprehensive (n=165)	50	35	24	51	41	62	7	2	3	44	13	2
Henslowe Academy (n=144)	53	11	16	29	33	46	3	4	2	79	9	0
The Massinger School (n=218)	57	22	19	39	31	89	4	8	2	115	22	0
Dekker High School (n=122)	33	9	4	55	28	42	4	7	4	35	14	0

Chart 3: Activities that support student learning about Shakespeare (percentage of responses)



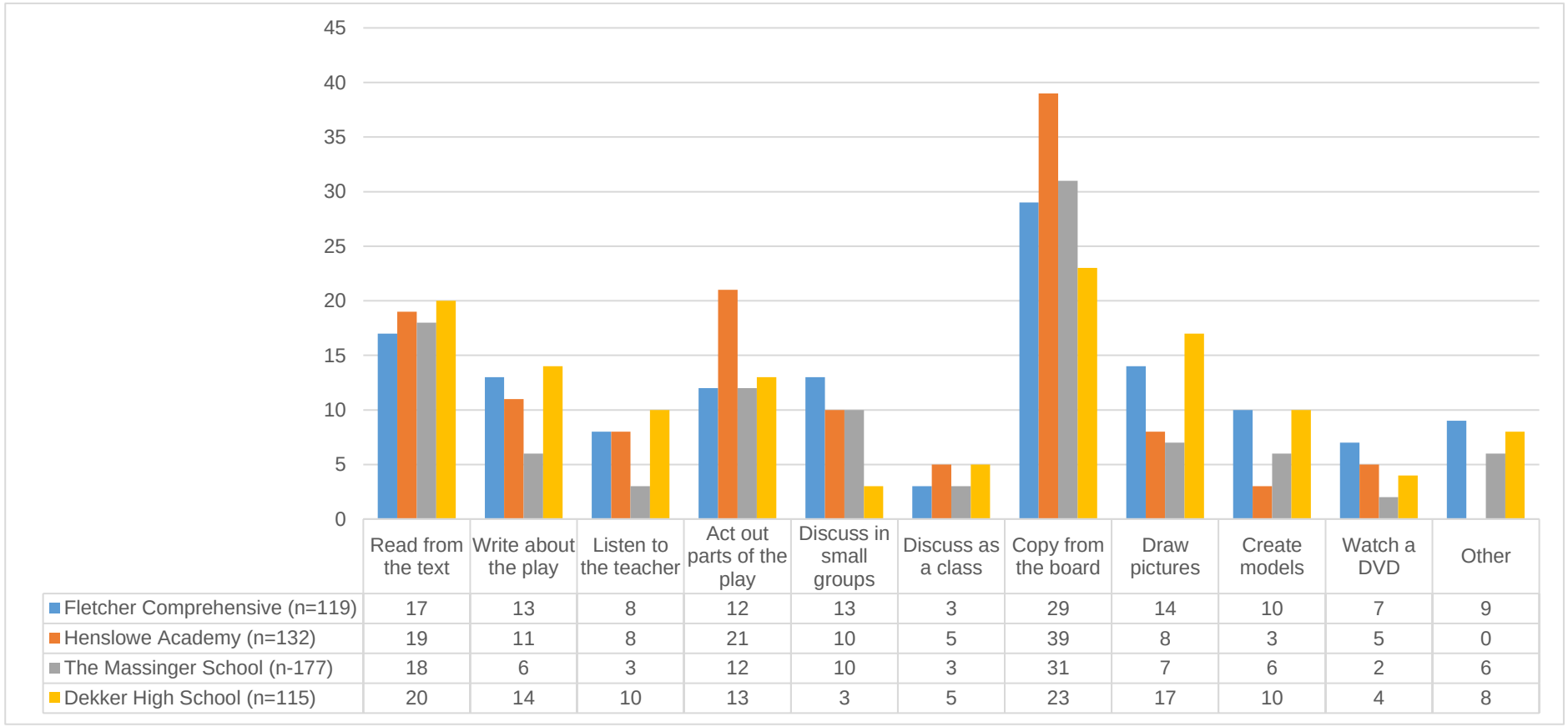
	Read from the text	Write about the play	Listen to the teacher	Act out parts of the play	Discuss in small groups	Discuss as a class	Copy from the board	Draw pictures	Create models	Watch a DVD	Other	Don't know
Fletcher Comprehensive (n=165)	30	21	15	31	25	38	4	1	2	27	8	1
Henslowe Academy (n=144)	37	8	11	20	23	32	2	3	1	55	6	0
The Massinger School (n=218)	26	10	9	18	14	41	2	4	1	53	10	0
Dekker High School (n=122)	27	7	3	45	23	34	3	6	3	29	11	0

Chart 4: Activities that do not support student learning about Shakespeare (number of responses)



	Read from the text	Write about the play	Listen to the teacher	Act out parts of the play	Discuss in small groups	Discuss as a class	Copy from the board	Draw pictures	Create models	Watch a DVD	Other
Fletcher Comprehensive (n=119)	20	16	9	14	15	4	34	17	12	8	11
Henslowe Academy (n=132)	25	14	10	28	13	7	51	11	4	6	0
The Massinger School (n-177)	32	11	5	22	18	6	55	12	10	3	11
Dekker High School (n=115)	23	16	12	15	4	6	27	19	12	5	9

Chart 5: Activities that do not support student learning about Shakespeare (percentage of responses)



	Read from the text	Write about the play	Listen to the teacher	Act out parts of the play	Discuss in small groups	Discuss as a class	Copy from the board	Draw pictures	Create models	Watch a DVD	Other
Fletcher Comprehensive (n=119)	17	13	8	12	13	3	29	14	10	7	9
Henslowe Academy (n=132)	19	11	8	21	10	5	39	8	3	5	0
The Massinger School (n-177)	18	6	3	12	10	3	31	7	6	2	6
Dekker High School (n=115)	20	14	10	13	3	5	23	17	10	4	8

Reading from the text was the most divisive activity, achieving the second highest number of responses both as an activity that supports learning and as an activity that does not help students to learn. Comments about reading and writing were focused on understanding the plays in preparation for writing essays, which appears to be the most common form of assessment for Year 9 students. Student A039 wrote, 'Reading and writing about the play […] helps me find a deeper meaning to the play and helps a lot when it comes to exams'. Similarly, student A154 commented, 'Writing PEE [19] paragraphs from essay style questions after thoroughly reading and understanding the section' helps.

Not all comments about reading were so essay focused, with several students writing about understanding the plays better through reading (C202) or learning new vocabulary (C234). However, reading can also be 'repetative and boring' (B146) and some students also commented on the ability of other students to read aloud coherently and clearly (Alice, Fletcher Comprehensive). Sam (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me, 'I just keep […] concentrating on the pronunciation and then I kind of forget what I read', suggesting that for both those listening and for those reading, the difficulty of speaking the language prevents them from engaging with its meaning. Similarly, Ryan (Henslowe Academy) said, 'I find it easier to understand […] when I'm listening to someone else 'cause I don't have to like focus on actually speaking'. Pace was also an issue for some: 'sometimes it goes to fast and I would like to read at my pace' (A165).

Writing is perhaps a more controversial activity for these students. For some it proves that they have understood the text and prepares them for writing essays in examinations. For others, however, it is 'a waste of time because we would already understand it' (C217), and 'it's quite boring especially after you've read it and watched it' (C108). Student D121 suggested that 'I could be doing something else more helpful', while for student A072, 'Non stop writing […] just makes me think about how much my hand hurts'. These comments imply that some students see written assessment tasks as irrelevant to their learning, which occurs mostly through reading, discussion and watching DVDs. These activities are the ones that most enable them to understand Shakespeare's stories and language.

4.2.4.4 Using DVDs to study Shakespeare

The use of DVDs seems ubiquitous in the teaching of Shakespeare, but as discussed above, practices vary between schools. Practices also vary within schools, according to the students' comments, with some teachers showing a film version of a Shakespeare play before reading the text (Nerissa, The Massinger School), others showing it scene by scene, alternating with reading

[19] PEE stands for 'Point – Evidence – Explanation', a paragraph format used in some schools to structure the written analysis of texts.

the text (A174), and others showing it after studying the play (A044). Some students said that they only saw clips of a film version (A014), rather than the whole film, but however DVDs are used in lessons, most students find them helpful.

Watching a DVD was seen by many students as necessary for understanding the storylines, language and characters of the plays. Donny (Henslowe Academy) said, 'we wouldn't understand if we just read Shakespeare's play in all his old English so it's a lot easier when we watch the movie […] you can get lost in the book'. Student C034 commented, 'I can understand what the characters look like and what there personality is like' from watching a film version, and student C209, whose questionnaire responses suggest that she is not particularly interested in Shakespeare, also wrote that DVDs help her study the plays because 'it is quicker compared to reading the text'. For these students, understanding the plays seems to be the purpose of studying Shakespeare, and DVDs are a means to achieving that end. This understanding then leads more easily into written work (C090).

A few students understood that there is a difference between the written text and any performed version: watching a DVD 'helps us compare the scrip to the play' (C191), and 'you see different interpretations of the play' (D122). These differences were not always seen positively: Student C022 recognised that 'many things can be different in DVD's', but for her the consequence of these differences is confusion, working directly against understanding the plays. Only Selena (The Massinger School) told me that her class had been shown two different film versions of the same play, *Romeo and Juliet*: 'One with Leonardo DiCaprio and the other one was more of an older one I think', which our subsequent discussion suggested was probably Zeffirelli's version of the play (*William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, 1996; *Romeo and Juliet*, 1968). Few other students participating in this research recognised that there can be multiple interpretations of a play. Student C025 suggested that watching the DVD means 'you know were everything is set and have a clear picture of the characters', student B070 commented, 'it helps visualise what the plays would of looked like', and student A172 suggested that DVDs allow her to 'actually see what Shakespear say's'. These uncritical comments suggest that some students see filmed versions as accurate representations of Shakespeare's plays rather than as interpretations.

Some students also found DVDs useful because they saw watching as 'more interactive [which] helps me remember things better' in comparison with activities such as writing and listening to the teacher (A043). They often paired watching DVDs with drama and creative activities as they are 'the practical and watchable things becase I fidget alot and thats what helps me' (B020). These students were reflective and self-aware: 'I find that when I'm watching things I process more easily' (C043), and student D125 liked both watching DVDs and drama activities because

they ‘engage all sense’. Several students also saw watching a DVD as a fun activity that ‘gives us a break’ (C228), although not all students made a positive correlation between fun and learning: student B073 suggested that watching a DVD is not helpful ‘as it is for enjoyment’, and Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) commented that teachers would ‘happily sit there and do nothing for a lesson’. Angelica (Dekker High School) told me that her teacher showed a DVD at the end of their scheme of work ‘just as a treat’, although Harry, the teacher I interviewed at Dekker High School, stated that he and his colleagues do use Shakespeare DVDs to support learning in their lessons.

DVDs were not universally seen as helpful. The play is ‘hard to remember because it goes fast’ when watched on-screen (A141), and ‘we already knew what went on by reading the text’ (B109). The first of these comments suggests watching before studying the play, while the second suggests watching afterwards; both comments imply that these students did not understand why they were watching a DVD and demonstrate that using DVDs to support the study of a Shakespeare play is not always seen as a helpful experience. Learning objectives must therefore be made clear by teachers if more students are to value watching Shakespeare plays via the medium of film.

Questionnaire 1 did not ask the students about the value of theatre as a method of studying Shakespeare, since the focus was on classroom activities. Only one student noted down seeing a live performance as an ‘other’ activity undertaken as part of lessons about Shakespeare (C104), but she was one of ten students who included ‘going to the theatre to see a play’ (B140) as an activity that supports their learning, and another student listed school trips as a positive activity (A134). Not all of these students had seen Shakespeare performed live at the theatre, but several showed positive attitudes towards studying his plays through their questionnaire responses, in particular student C104 who wrote that she frequently attended the theatre with her grandfather, including having been to a performance at Shakespeare’s Globe.This family support is unusual, however, and I discuss this further in section 4.3.

The use of performed versions of Shakespeare’s plays, particularly through the medium of DVDs, appears to be commonplace in school classrooms. However, practices vary, and as a result the value placed on their use also appears to vary. For many students, DVDs clearly offer an important activity in support of their learning, and as one of the most common lesson activities, it seems unlikely that their use will diminish in the Shakespeare classroom.

4.2.4.5 Studying Shakespeare through drama

Drama is a separate curriculum subject in all four of the schools in this study; the students interviewed for this research had already started studying their GCSE subject choices, which for

most of them did not include Drama. London (Fletcher Comprehensive) suggested that drama in English lessons was a novelty, 'different to our other lessons', which made it an attractive way of learning. However, London also said, 'I'm not that good at acting and I'm not that confident with acting', suggesting that drama activities are understood as performative rather than exploratory, which is not the intention of the active approaches promoted by Gibson (1998), Stredder (2009) and Banks (2013) (see section 2.4). Katherine (The Massinger School) said that watching the film first was important, as 'it's good to know what it's supposed to be like', otherwise 'you're going to add too much of your own stuff in'. She laughed and added, 'if Shakespeare was watching you he'd be like "oh what are you doing?"'. Her comments show the belief found among many of these students that there is a correct way to perform the plays.

The photo elicitation exercise used in the pre-theatre visit interviews (see Appendix IV.ii.ii) provoked some interesting comments about studying Shakespeare in a drama studio. Zygmunt (Fletcher Comprehensive) found the empty space without even a stage to designate audience and actors uncomfortable. Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) also asked 'where are the desks?' as if the empty space offered for drama was disconcerting for him. He said that he would need 'a suitable writing surface' which he agreed suggests that studying Shakespeare equates with writing. Charlie (Fletcher Comprehensive) also suggested that in a drama studio it would be 'easier to get out of work […] because you're in groups and the teacher's not going to be able to focus on everyone', and Samantha (The Massinger School) said that she enjoys drama, but that it 'kind of wastes time' that should be spent on more serious activities such as reading and writing.

These ideas were repeated by students on their pre-theatre visit questionnaires. Student A039 wrote, 'I tend to get sidetracked' and Ryan (Henslowe Academy) wrote, 'we already know what happens so it just wastes time'. Several students commented, 'I hate acting' (D033), and other negative comments included 'it does not help my understanding of the play' (James, Henslowe Academy), 'people forget about the story and get into conflict about what to do' (C114), and 'it gets to repetetive when we are all doing the same part of a play' (C205). Student D011 wrote, 'it's useless and we forget about the actual plot as we are so wrapped up in rembering our lines', and student D120 stated, 'it doesn't really help me to understand what the context is about'. These comments offer a wide range of negative attitudes towards using drama activities to study a Shakespeare play, but all suggest that the students need teachers to explain why such activities are included in a scheme of work and the expected outcome.

In contrast, Sam (Fletcher Comprehensive) said that drama 'makes everyone a lot more engaged than just sitting down with a piece of paper saying this is your new topic'. Ryan and James (both Henslowe Academy) were enthusiastic when looking at the photograph of the drama studio,

with James commenting, 'I'd be excited – looks fun going over to the drama studio and seeing it like a physical kind of re-enactment of the scene rather than just reading the text the script'. When asked which classroom he would prefer, James chose the drama studio, describing it as 'special' and 'out of the ordinary'. Alice (Fletcher Comprehensive) also showed understanding of how physical activity can aid learning about character and theme. She said that drama can help someone to ask, 'Why did they do this? What really drove them? And then you can really think about it in the bodiment of acting and being that character'. Other students agreed with this in their questionnaire responses, writing that drama helps because 'you can see how the character felt' (A036) and that 'Acting them out brings the plays to life, in a way, and also brings us to life!' (C083). For student D112, 'Acting it out helps me because we can test out the language', which then gives a 'better understanding of the play' (A124), from 'a diffrent percpective' (C152). These comments also suggest that where watching a DVD in lessons appears to suggest a definitive version of a play for most students, drama activities can be used to promote the idea of multiple interpretations, supporting co-creation of knowledge and reducing dependence on the teacher. Overall, more students were positive about drama approaches for studying Shakespeare except in Henslowe Academy, where comments showed an equal number of students who liked and didn't like using drama for studying Shakespeare (see Charts 2, 3, 4 and 5).

Donny (Henslowe Academy), Katherine (The Massinger School) and Angelica (Dekker High School) all spoke about having more performance-based lessons in Year 7 when studying Shakespeare, although Donny said that 'we didn't get much done at all'. Katherine told me, 'I'm not a big drama fan but I can appreciate that we did that because that stuck in my head a lot more than say when we did *Othello* in Year 8 and we didn't do the drama'. Angelica summed up her experience of playing Bottom in the final scene of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* saying, 'I liked doing that – it was good'. The use of drama as a teaching method in Year 7 and Year 8, moving to more static reading and writing by Year 9 seems to equate with a move from fun to serious learning as the students approach their GCSEs. This may also relate to the time allotted for studying a single text, with more texts needing to be studied as students progress and therefore less time available for exploratory activities such as drama.

The consensus of opinion amongst the students interviewed in all four schools was that drama is a fun activity, but little learning is likely to happen, and that a more traditional classroom setting with rows of desks all facing towards the teacher would enable most concentration and progress towards understanding the plays. The concept of drama as a serious method for teaching Shakespeare does not seem evident amongst the students interviewed in the four schools in which I conducted this research. While the positive comments do outweigh the

negative comments, only 27% of the 649 students who responded to question 4a about what helps their learning commented on drama activities, and only 15% of the 543 students who responded to question 4b about what doesn't help their learning mentioned drama activities. These statistics suggest that drama approaches to studying Shakespeare are not important enough for the majority of students to comment on. David, the teacher responsible for Key Stage 3 in Fletcher Comprehensive, told me that he treats Shakespeare plays 'as text […] I think that I'm probably quite typical there […] that's what I'm good at'. In spite of the promotion of active approaches to teaching Shakespeare over the past thirty years following the Shakespeare and Schools project (see section 2.4.1), there does not seem to be much evidence of this pedagogy in these schools. It is certainly not used habitually, according to the students, which may explain their reluctance to engage with drama activities and/or their perception of drama as fun but unhelpful as a method for studying Shakespeare rather than as a subject in its own right.

4.2.5 Shakespeare as a historical figure

About 100 students wrote about Shakespeare as a historical figure and as 'old – because he lived a very long time ago' (B001). This focus on history may have been as a result of the requirement to include context at GCSE (see section 1.2). Student C063 wrote, 'When I hear the word "Shakespeare" I always think of it like history'. While some students wrote about a range of historical periods in their comments on questionnaire 1, including Georgian (B088), Victorian (A177) and twentieth century (B098), as well as Tudor (D116) and Elizabethan (D093), there was a sense for many of them that 'old' equates to irrelevant, so that when asked if they could relate Shakespeare's plays to their own lives, many answered 'NO' (A001).

Many references to history were purely factual, such as 'I think of the Elizabeathen time because [Shakespeare] would perform to Queen Elizabeth I' (A125), and Shakespeare is 'one of Britains most historical Authors' (B107). Some comments were positive, with student C125 commenting, 'It's like I have time traveled there to see how life was like for Shakespere and what inspired him to write the plays', while student C168 wrote, 'I think of a chance to see how life in the past was like and their different cultures and beliefs shown/reflected in the play'. These students appear to see Shakespeare's plays as products of their time but seem interested in what that historical period is like and which of its elements are reflected in the plays that they study. Other students' comments, however, suggested that the historical context of the plays made them too remote to be interesting for contemporary society: 'the word Shakespare reminds of the olden days when everything was black and white and dull' (C088). These comments about the historical context of Shakespeare's plays may reflect what students have been told in lessons, to comply with GCSE assessment objective 3 (see Table 1 on page 21), but they demonstrate a sense

amongst some students that because Shakespeare is a figure from history, he is not relatable to them.

Shakespeare's 'old' language (D134) also caused problems for some students: he was 'A writer from the Elizabethan times who was ahead of his time but used a lot of words I don't understand' (A008). Student B041 wrote, 'When I hear the word "Shakespeare" I think old how different the english language was. The use of old language that we will defintly not use today'. Many of these students wrote about 'old english' (A108), and some included specific words, 'like "thou" and "art"' (A153) and 'thy, thou, thee' (C108). Katie (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me, 'it's like confusing […] all the words aren't like the same as like normal English'. For student C045, this causes concern, 'because I can't get the language in my head and I don't understand the Elizabethian words'. The language therefore seems to fix the plays in their Elizabethan context for these students.

4.2.6 Dislike of Shakespeare

While most students are aware that they must study Shakespeare in preparation for their GCSE examinations, many of them do not enjoy this experience, confirming the view expressed in the literature discussed in section 2.4. Shakespearean language is one of the main reasons for not liking the plays. The word "Shakespeare" causes student A178 to 'think about long plays with complecated languge that no one understands', an idea that was repeated on several questionnaires across all four schools. The language is therefore one of the key reasons why some students label Shakespeare 'BORING' (C081) and 'ununderstanderble' (D090).

Those students who labelled Shakespeare boring often did so because they said that they could not understand, although some wrote that they 'don't find it interesting' (C263). Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) suggested that Shakespeare is like 'blue cheese', in that some people love it and others hate it. However, some gave more specific reasons for disliking studying Shakespeare, in particular too much focus on Shakespeare and not enough on other texts. Student A198 wrote, 'I've already learnt about it too many times', and student A122 stated, 'I keep learning about this when I was in primary and secondary school and find it boring and want to learn about something else'. These words echo the comment from student B077 discussed above, that 'I've done so much work on him I want something new'. Student C015 also labelled the stories as 'quite predictable and repetitive. There is always a similar storyline'. Other texts were mentioned, including *Of Mice and Men* (Steinbeck, 1937), which both London (Fletcher Comprehensive) and Mo (Henslowe Academy) preferred to Shakespeare. In particular, Donny (Henslowe Academy) told me that, in *Of Mice and Men*, 'the language is a lot easier to understand', and also said he had enjoyed studying *Animal Farm* (Orwell, 1945). Katherine (The

Massinger School) said, 'I know that [Shakespeare's] a good writer but the thing is I can say that about a lot of people […] you can get the same message across with a modern text', and Alonya (Dekker High School) wrote that 'although it is classic there are more recent books which are better', suggesting that, for these students, Shakespeare's high status in the curriculum is perhaps undeserved. Other students prefer different curriculum subjects: student A170 commented that he sometimes discusses with teachers 'why we have to learn about [Shakespeare] as we could just have another science or maths lesson'. The reasons for these preferences are unclear, but it would be unrealistic to expect all students to like all subjects they are expected to study in school; for some to state a preference for different subjects supports the idea that the questionnaires elicited truthful statements from at least some of them (see section 3.7)

Shakespeare does not evoke such strong attitudes in all students, however. For some, Shakespeare is 'just a word' (A109), and they feel 'normal' (B069) or feel 'nothing' (B002). Student A106 wrote, 'I think of it as work rather than a descriptive, or detailed or meaningful word', suggesting that studying Shakespeare is part of what goes on in school and does not require an emotional response. This unquestioning attitude towards Shakespeare's presence in school also extends beyond school: 'Shakespeare is something that has always been there and people make referances to Shakespeare like ALL the time' (C190). Several students used the word 'just' in their comments: Shakespeare is 'just a name' (A072), and 'just another author […] just another person' (C240). This language implies that Shakespeare is nothing out of the ordinary, a topic about which some students 'don't really care' (B069). These students seem to passively accept Shakespeare's plays as part of the curriculum, as something that must be studied, but without any emotional response, either positive or negative.

4.3 Experiences of Shakespeare beyond lessons

Most students participating in this research, 480 out of the 683 students that answered the question, stated that they never discuss Shakespeare outside of lessons. This response supports the comment made by Jasmine, who trialled the questionnaires before they were used in schools and who said that no-one would admit to doing this (see section 3.6.2). Many of these negative responses were a simple 'no' (A122), while others were a more emphatic 'NO' (C111) or 'never' (B045). These students emphasised that for them, Shakespeare is purely a subject for school, but Jasmine's comment suggests that what a student might do and what a student might admit to doing are not necessarily the same.

A small number of students explained why they do not discuss Shakespeare beyond lessons. For 31 students, Shakespeare simply does not interest them. Student A157 wrote, 'its not a topic

me/my friends and family are interesting in', speaking for her social group and emphasising how important peer and family relationships are for developing areas of interest outside lessons. Student C254 also emphasised the importance of peer relationships, writing 'none of my classmates are interested'. When I asked at Fletcher Comprehensive if the students in Group 1 ever discussed Shakespeare with their older siblings to get an idea of what to expect in lessons, Katie said, 'I haven't asked them'. A further 11 students labelled Shakespeare as 'boring' (D091) and 12 students wrote that he is 'irrelevant' (B009) in response to this question. Selena (The Massinger School) told me that only when she took home the consent form for her parents to agree to her participation in this research did she discover that her mother had studied Shakespeare in school in Afghanistan. Student D020 commented, 'My mum likes Shakespeare but I try to avoid talking about it because it's boring', demonstrating that even where family interest is present, some students do not want to engage with Shakespeare's plays outside school.

4.3.1 Discussions relating to school

Over 200 students did admit to discussing Shakespeare outside of their lessons. Approximately half of these discussions still related to school, occurring 'after a lesson I've just had that was to do with him' (A042) or 'if my brothers or parents ask how school was' (A014). Some students ask their family and friends for help, such as student A201, who wrote, 'I do talk to my sister about it as she is studying it for GCSE's', and student B063, who speaks about Shakespeare to his mother 'as she is a English teacher because it helps with my learning'. These students seem to recognise that family members have expertise that is useful to support their own studies and are happy to admit to talking about Shakespeare in such circumstances. More hesitantly, student C048 commented, 'it depends, but when I talk about Shakespeare I talk to my friends about it because in some of the plays we get confused with characters or what is actually going on', while student B108 stated, 'we don't talk about Shakespeare unless we are learning about one of Shakespeare's plays', situating Shakespeare as a school subject and speaking for his peer group. Homework was also an important aspect of these school discussions: 'I do not talk about Shakespeare out of lesson unless I am doing homework on him' (A204).

Aron, Ryan and James (Henslowe Academy) disagreed over the value of discussing Shakespeare outside the classroom, particularly with family members. Aron stated:

> If I'm talking to my parents and then I'm talking to them about Shakespeare they wouldn't really tell me […] what the words mean and how that can relate to the text and how that relates to their position that they're in – the characters were in.

For him, the only point of discussing Shakespeare would seem to be to develop his understanding of the plays to support his in-school learning, and his comments suggest that he

does not believe his parents have the knowledge to help him. When asked about his parents' attitude to Shakespeare, however, he said, 'I haven't really spoken to them about it', a lack of communication that he seems to assume suggests 'I don't think they're particularly interested in it either'. Ryan agreed:

> If you talk to your parents they're probably just going to say […] what's their favourite part about the plays and stuff like that and who their favourite characters are, but they're not really going to tell you much about what we need to know for our exams.

Ryan's comment again emphasises the focus on examinations that for many students seems to be the goal of studying Shakespeare. James, however, who discusses Shakespeare with his grandfather who 'is a film director and is interested in theatre', told me that family can offer valuable insights into Shakespeare's plays. From within the context of a family that appears to enjoy Shakespeare, James said:

> At school we just see the academic side of it like how can you analyse this to help you in your test and stuff, but talking to my family they kind of see the artistic side how the beauty of his language is and stuff so you can see it from a different perspective and I think that's quite useful as well.

He told me that he believes this helps in his school lessons, as 'I just understand it a bit better'; his family context possibly gives him an advantage over his peers who do not have similar family contexts.

4.3.2 Discussing Shakespeare for enjoyment

A few students also admitted to speaking about Shakespeare at home other than in relation to school lessons, like James. Hermione (The Massinger School) wrote, 'I do talk about Shakespeare often to my parents because his plays are so deep and I love to discuss them. Often my parents have also read the plays and we have fun talking or debating about plots and characters'. Ezra (Dekker High School) wrote on her first questionnaire that she speaks about Shakespeare to 'my friends and family because I ~~love~~ adore Shakespear and his plays'; her exchange of 'love' for 'adore' demonstrates how strongly she feels about this. When I asked her about her response to this question in the pre-theatre visit interview, she told me that her favourite play is *Twelfth Night*. This was not a play she had studied in school, but 'when I was younger my parents bought me the collection of the Shakespeare plays', which further discussion suggested were the stories retold by Matthews and Ross (2010). Occasionally students like D020, discussed above, said that they avoided discussing Shakespeare in spite of enthusiasm for the plays in their families, but it seems that most of those students whose families are enthusiastic about Shakespeare, such as James and Ezra, believe that they have generally benefitted from these additional opportunities to discuss him outside school.

There were several students who wrote in more detail about their conversations about Shakespeare outside lessons, and these comments offer insights into how Shakespeare's plays become embedded in young people's cultures. Some focused on a particular play and others on language. *Romeo and Juliet* was the play mentioned most often, as 'a love story that ends tragically' (C071). The love between the two central characters appeared to be idealised by these students, such as student C074, who commented, 'I love romatic books or play and this is a play where to people that extremely love each other that they would die for each other. Which I love', and student C239, who wrote, 'Romeo and Juliet is one of my favourite Shakespeare plays me and my friends would always talk about I love Romeo and Juliet'. This play clearly provokes a passionate response amongst these students, who are happy to admit that they have absorbed it into their social activities outside school.

Other students did not mention specific plays, but their comments suggest that they have absorbed some Shakespearean words and phrases into their own language. Student C168 stated, 'sometimes famous quotes just pop up in the conversations e.g. "To be or not to be, that is the question." Maybe as a joke or something'. Student B071 also suggested that Shakespeare's language can be used as a joke, saying 'it is what someone would say if someone were to speak very formally', implying that Shakespearean language is high class and suitable for parodying. Shakespeare quotations are used by these students principally for fun: 'sometimes as a joke like for example if someone knocks on my bedroom door, I'll say "who art thou?"' (C114), and 'sometimes me and my friend pretend to be all posh and English and talk like Shakespeare for fun' (C190). However, student C190 also wrote, 'Once I used the word "thus" in a sentence and I honestly felt so clever and Shakespeare-y. :D'[20], again suggesting that Shakespeare's language is high class, but also showing how she is beginning to absorb some words into her own vocabulary.

It appears that there is a direct correlation between some students' home contexts and their appreciation of Shakespeare's plays. Family members and friends with knowledge about Shakespeare can support school studies, but those with enthusiasm for the plays seem to create a positive and rewarding atmosphere where ideas can be exchanged and the stories and language can be enjoyed. For example, student A034, who likes Shakespeare's plays, discusses them with her mother, who also likes Shakespeare, and Alice (Fletcher Comprehensive), who enjoys studying Shakespeare, discusses the plays with her family, particularly her grandfather, who she says is 'an english professer'. Using quotations as jokes out of context seems to

[20] :D is the written form of the emoticon 😀 which means general pleasure and good cheer or humour, according to https://emojipedia.org/grinning-face/.

encourage these students to take ownership of Shakespeare's plays for themselves. While most students do not benefit from this playful and encouraging atmosphere at home, those who do would appear to have a definite advantage when studying the plays at school.

4.3.3 Relating to Shakespeare's plays

Regardless of whether they discussed Shakespeare's plays outside of lessons or not, 160 students could relate his stories directly to their own lives or to the life of someone they know, compared to 400 students who said they could not. Those that could not mostly seemed to agree with student B148, who wrote, 'his plays are very different and are about life in the 1600's not the 2000's', underlining the view of Shakespeare as a historical figure (see section 4.2.5). Others find Shakespeare 'a bit too extreme' (D113) or 'unrealistic' (D040), while student C068 summed up several comments, writing 'I'm still young and haven't gone through such harsh/serious experiances yet'. As a Year 9 student, aged 13 or 14 years, this may seem reasonable, but for some of those who can relate to Shakespeare's plays, it is also sadly untrue, with many comments relating negative life experiences.

Discrimination, for race, gender or sexual orientation, was a dominant theme for those students who could relate Shakespeare's plays to their own lives or the lives of people they know. Bob (Fletcher Comprehensive) wrote of his personal experience of racism, relating it to *The Merchant of Venice*: 'in M.O.V there is racism towards Jews, because I am islamic my neighbour who is a pentioner decided to call the bottom floor of our flat downgraded because we are muslim'. Student C170 also commented, 'my family has experienced racism as we are Muslims', and in a less personal account, student C196 wrote, 'The Merchant of Venice relates the prejudice towards Jews. This is the case with Muslims nowadays […] People don't see the Muslims in a good way. There's a lot of racism and discrimination'. It was interesting that students did not comment on Portia's racism in *The Merchant of Venice*, such as when she says of the Prince of Morocco, 'Let all of his complexion choose me so' (2.7.79), but rather focused on her as a feminist icon: Hermione (The Massinger School) told me in the pre-theatre visit interview, 'when everyone was all fussing over how to save Antonio it was her who did it'. This may reflect the teacher's choice of scenes for more in-depth study in lessons, supporting the view that the teacher is highly influential in students' experiences of Shakespeare.

Relationships was another theme that students could see evidenced in their own families. Eleven (The Massinger School) wrote 'about someone I know', comparing them to *Romeo and Juliet*, where 'the 2 lovers can't get together without hardships in the way', and student C043 wrote, 'Juliet is forced into a forced marriage, and that still happens now'. While arranged marriages are seen by some as happening 'in other countries, mostly to girls' (C156), student

C205 commented, ‘I know people who’s parents made them have an arranged marriage’, suggesting that this is an experience directly witnessed by young people in England. Student C210 also countered accusations of a lack of realism, stating, ‘I feel like events in Shakespeare’s plays are exaggerated events that can be found in life today. For example, your parents not approving of who you love’.

Other themes that occurred to students included ‘betrayal or even jealousy’ (A079), ‘stress, deppression and suicide’ (C040), and ‘Bravery in Macbeth’ (C080). More generally, ‘In all the plays there’s a problem and I relate to that’ (C061), and ‘There is alot of miscumonication with each other. like there is with gossip in secondary school with girls who think they hear something but it is really something else’ (C138). However, the relatively small proportion of students who could find anything relatable in the plays they had studied suggests that this is something teachers need to draw out explicitly as part of their lessons. Perhaps it is also because lessons for these students seem to focus on producing GCSE-style essays (see section 1.2), that topical meanings remain hidden.

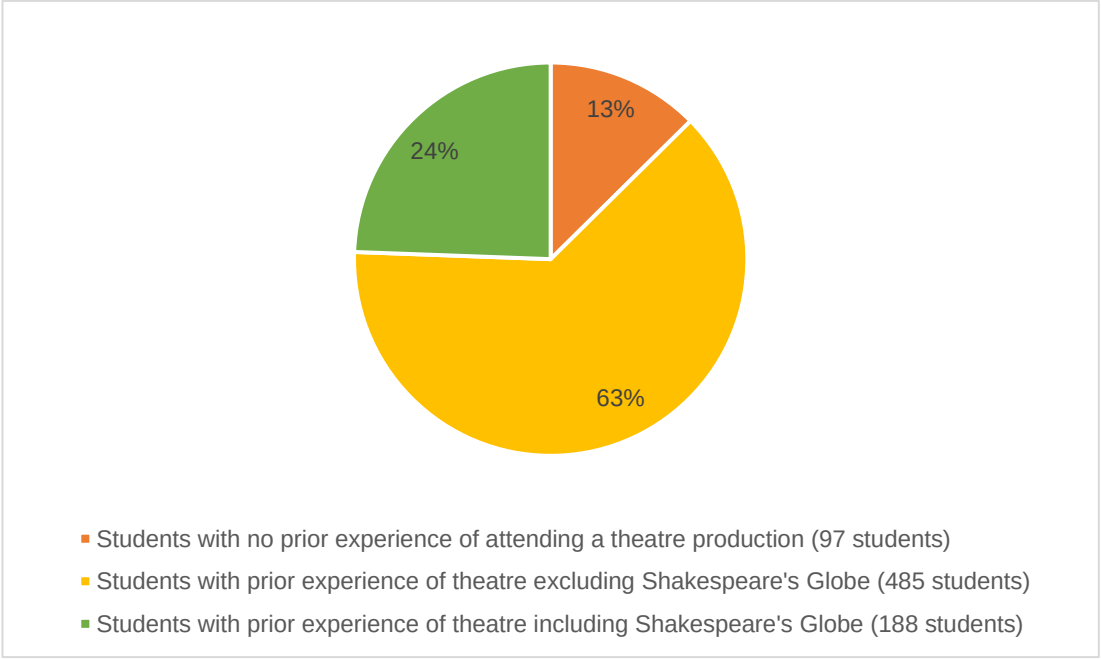
4.4 Expectations for Shakespeare in performance

Very few students said that they had seen a Shakespeare play performed in the theatre prior to the PSwDB visit, although most had seen at least one play as a filmed version. Their prior theatre attendance is shown in Chart 6. Those who had visited Shakespeare’s Globe had mostly visited with school, often their primary school, and most of those who gave details of their visit wrote that they had taken a tour of the building and taken part in a workshop, rather than having attended a performance. Those who had visited with their families were more likely to have watched a performance, although some visits were more casual, for example, ‘My mum and I were walking past it and decided to look inside’ (B071). For many of them, their expectations for a production of a Shakespeare play were therefore not based on experience, and yet most had very clear ideas about what they would see on-stage.

135 students, just over 20% of the 633 who answered this question, wrote that they had no expectations for a production of a Shakespeare play. Some of their comments suggested a reluctance to see Shakespeare performed, since other comments on questionnaire 1 showed a negative attitude towards Shakespeare in school, for example student D109, who wrote ‘NO, I DON’T [have any expectations]’ after earlier writing that Shakespeare is ‘Boring, Complicated words, Confusing’. Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) told me that he did not expect to enjoy his theatre visit, and student D002 wrote, ‘I dont expect much from Shakespeare plays’, suggesting that some students had already decided that they would not enjoy the production. These comments suggest a resistance to all experiences of Shakespeare’s plays which consequently

might prevent engagement with the PSwDB production. Other students who had no expectations were 'not sure' what to expect (B121), which some said was as a direct lack of experience: 'I dont have much expectations because I have no knowledge about theatre stuff' (C190). This reluctance of a few students to commit themselves to an opinion, from a position of lacking knowledge, provides an interesting contrast to the majority of students in this group who appear to resist all expectations of Shakespeare after deciding that his plays are boring or too difficult for them to understand, demonstrating the varied reasoning that underlies the similarity of some of their responses.

Chart 6: Students' experiences of live theatre prior to PSwDB[21]



Students were guided to comment on 'things like costumes, scenery, acting style, accents' when stating their expectations for a production of a Shakespeare play (see questionnaire 1, Appendix IV.i). Many students who answered this question therefore restricted their comments to one or more of these four elements of a production. Some also commented more generally on what a production should be like, referring to themes and their responses as audience members. Only a few students seemed to understand that each production is one interpretation of a Shakespeare play, therefore 'you can interpret it in all ways, modern or original it doesn't matter' (B123). These few tended to be those with more experience of seeing Shakespeare

[21] Of the 188 students who had previously visited Shakespeare's Globe, 82 stated that they had seen a performance there. While some of the remaining 106 students wrote that they had not seen a performance, not all clearly stated the purpose of their visit.

performed, which suggests that developing theatre literacy enables them to engage with a production without measuring it against a pre-determined set of criteria.

Several students who had not visited Shakespeare's Globe were clearly looking forward to the experience: 'I have seen films of his plays but not seen any performed live. But now we are going to the play it will be fun to see' (C062). Hermione (The Massinger School) told me, 'I'm quite excited for this to be like my first trip [to Shakespeare's Globe] and I can go and see the play actually happening', and Selena (The Massinger School) said that the theatre visit 'might get me more interested [in Shakespeare]', which she suggested might then help with her focus and concentration in future lessons.

4.4.1 Expectations that a Shakespeare production will be old and posh

More students commented on costumes than on any other element of a production, with 255 students out of the 633 who answered this question referring to costumes in their answer. For most of these students, the costumes should be 'Old, old, old fashioned' (A014), 'like they were back then' (B006), 'outdated' (B050), and 'traditional' (C129). These students' comments demonstrate a strong expectation of seeing the plays performed as historical artefacts. Other students wanted costumes to be 'realistic' (A151) and 'genuine and real' (C162). The concept of realism is interesting because it has a variety of connotations: it could be a demand for an authentically Elizabethan theatre experience, or for a true-to-life presentation of theme and/or character, for example. Angelica (Dekker High School) told me, 'because I haven't seen that many [plays] I'd like to see the play how it was meant to be performed because then I can learn about it, and maybe once I know it well then I'd like a different interpretation'. There is an implicit assumption here that there is a correct version of the play, which for Angelica is an Elizabethan-styled performance. Only once this version of the play is known does Angelica believe that she can appreciate an alternative version, such as 'if they were all chickens or something'. She used these 'chickens' as an extreme and ridiculous hypothetical example of contemporary productions of Shakespeare to demonstrate her frustration at not being able to understand them. Her questionnaire responses showed that she had seen 'a modern take on romeo and Juliet' at the theatre, but it was not clear whether it was this production in particular that had caused her frustration with contemporary productions in general. In contrast, student C121 suggested that 'they should make it more modern and wear better clothes', demonstrating that not all students want a historical representation of the plays on stage.

Some students also expected costumes to indicate class. Mo (Henslowe Academy) told me:

> How Shakespeare looked and how he's always represented with the frilly thing round his– I don't know what that's called – but he looks very high class so I feel like the people

> he's talking about also act high class and don't seem – in the movie they have this massive kind of mansion and all of them running around – it doesn't seem like they're poor.

Mo was referencing Branagh's 1993 film of *Much Ado About Nothing* in this comment. Student B111 expected costumes to be 'posh', and others expected costumes to be 'sophisticated' (A106), with a 'large difference between wealthy and poor' (A135), and 'very grand and extravigant' (B066). These expectations of Shakespeare and his characters as high class, old and posh, are further evidence that many students in this study see Shakespeare as distant from their own social and cultural contexts, and it is therefore understandable why many of them do not relate the plays to their own lives.

111 students also commented on the stage setting. Often these students bracketed costumes and scenery together, for example student A074, who wrote, 'Costumes, scenery and acting styles should be similar to Shakespeare's time so then we can know the time period'. Several students expected scenery to be 'old' (Katie, Fletcher Comprehensive) and 'realistic' (B163), similar to the students' expectations for costumes, with suggestions of 'a castle or forest' (C165) or 'a village with tiny stalls every where' (Rosa, The Massinger School), implying that they expect scenery to offer a believable representation of the location in which the play takes place. Other students expected a 'darkish background' (A014) that would 'usualy be beige' (A028), 'dark and gloomy' (A085) or have 'a lot of mahogany coloured stuff' (A109). The students from Fletcher Comprehensive were more focused on this darkness and gloom than students in the other three schools, suggesting that this expectation may reflect a prior experience of a Shakespeare production for that school, rather than a more generalised expectation of, for example, age, mentioned in all four schools. What is clear from many students' comments is that they expect to see Elizabethan life reflected in what they see on stage, rather than Elizabethan theatre. Their desire for realism demonstrates a lack of knowledge about performances in the first Globe Theatre and seems rooted in experiences of contemporary theatre or film, with a sense of place and time created by visual effects.

A third common expectation for a production of a Shakespeare play was for specific accents to be adopted by the actors, with 182 students commenting on this aspect of a performance. As with the costumes, a common expectation was for accents to be 'posh' (B027), with others expecting an 'Old English accent' (A005) or an 'original British' accent (A093). These comments imply that many students believe that a production should be both historical and high class. Mo (Henslowe Academy) wrote, 'the accents should be very posh and in old english because thats how I would imagine the person speaking while I read the books', while student C108 wrote, 'Accents should be quite Shakespearian, spoken in a strange manner', as if Shakespeare created

his own style of speaking unrelated to everyday language. Student A028 equated this 'more posh' accent with the language spoken, 'as they will use language we might not use any more'. These comments perhaps indicate that ideas about Elizabethan pronunciation are not discussed in lessons; the students quoted here appeared to be unaware that 'the so-called 'posh' accent we know of today is only 200 years old' (Crystal, 2008, p.79).

Student D131 wrote that a performance 'should make you feel like your there'. Her comment does not make clear whether 'there' refers to the historical context of an authentic Elizabethan theatre, or a realistic setting. The students often appear to conflate historical presentation and realism. This suggests that many of them learn about the themes of the plays within the socio-historical context of Elizabethan England, but do not necessarily understand their theatrical context as well. Contextualised understanding also seems to further distance the plays from the students' own social and cultural contexts.

4.4.2 Expectations that a Shakespeare production should be high quality

Production quality is important to many students. 119 students commented on acting style, with some expecting 'melodrama' (A010) or 'excentric and exaggerated movement' (B007), but for most students, their only comment was that the actors 'should be able to perform well' (B179) and that 'the acting style should be perfect' (C020). Several students used the adjective 'good' (C111), but others wrote more detailed descriptions, such as student C227, who commented, 'The acting style should be very "flowy" meaning they use the whole stage, they should interact with the audience'. As with costumes and scenery, there was an expectation that 'the acting must be believable, as if the characters jumped out of the book and came alive' (Hermione, The Massinger School), while Jennifer (Dekker High School) wants actors 'to be their character and make audience believe that they're really that person'. This adds a further element to some students' demands for a 'realistic' production.

Student D145 summed up many of the students' comments, writing, 'When I watch Shakespeare I think all the above [elements of a Shakespeare production] have to be excellent'. The high quality of the production is clearly the most important expectation for many, regardless of whether they expect 'old' costumes and scenery or are open to more contemporary interpretations.

4.4.3 Different interpretations of Shakespeare's plays

Many of the students in this study appear to have fixed expectations of how a live theatre production of a Shakespeare play should be performed although a small number were more open to variety and to contemporary productions. 10 students expected a more contemporary version, saying that 'todays plays are more mordern' (B080) and should 'be adappted to moden

culture so it's new' (C061). While student C129 felt that 'the traditional clothing would be appropriate', she acknowledged that 'the use of guns and modern clothes' in Lurhman's film provided 'a nice twist' (*William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, 1996), and student C157 also wanted Shakespeare to 'be performed modernly and speak like how people speak nowadays'. Other students who had no specific expectations were open to seeing any interpretation: 'everything is fine' (B106). A few students also made metatheatrical comments, such as 'Sometimes the book is different to the play maybe to shorten it or its not that important' (B029). These few exceptions serve to emphasise how the socio-historical context of the plays dominates students' thinking about Shakespeare on stage. How far this is caused by the curriculum requirement to situate texts within their contexts of production is not clear, although these contexts do not seem to include an understanding of early modern performance practice; it would seem reasonable to assume that there is a connection.

4.5 Preparing for the theatre visit

The teachers' intentions for their students during and after the theatre visit did not always seem to be explicitly expressed to those students beforehand, so that many of the students did not understand why they were being taken to the theatre or what the intended outcome of the trip was. While the teachers' ideas about PSwDB were similar in all four schools participating in this research, in-class preparations for seeing *Much Ado About Nothing* varied between and within schools.

David, Key Stage 3 co-ordinator at Fletcher Comprehensive, told me that he felt 'morally bound' to take up the opportunity for every student to see Shakespeare performed, particularly since this was at 'not just *a* theatre but the *Globe* theatre'. This was an idea repeated by Anne, Head of English at The Massinger School, who said, 'one, I'd want them to go and see a Shakespeare production […] two, I'd want them to see the Globe, and to see them both together is a unique opportunity, especially for the girls within this area, more of a deprived area of London'. She added, 'in my view, every single child within the year group has the right to go along and to see the Globe theatre and to experience a Shakespeare play in that way'. Persephone, Head of English at Henslowe Academy, where the students were studying *Much Ado About Nothing* at the time of their theatre visit, said that 'I've always believed that if you're teaching a play and it's on you have to see it – it's almost like a moral responsibility […] they all deserve to have access to experiences like this'. This language of morals and rights suggests that these three teachers believe that PSwDB offers a very important cultural as well as educational experience. Harry, Lead Teacher for Year 9 English at Dekker High School, said that in his view the trip also 'makes the students a little more mature' and that it is part of the transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The theatre visit then becomes symbolic of development towards adulthood.

The theatre visit is compulsory in these four schools, ensuring that no student misses out on what teachers see as a hugely beneficial experience, socially and culturally as well as for learning.

The teachers also had more prosaic ideas about their expectations for the theatre visit. David hoped that the students would get 'mainly enjoyment' from the visit and an 'emotional reaction' to the play, even though the students at Fletcher Comprehensive had not studied it and he had not arranged any in-class preparation beforehand. He said:

> 'at the upper ends like [there might be] understanding and appreciation, but really I think before that […] enjoyment, that we're exposing them to something that maybe they're not accustomed to, maybe they didn't think they would enjoy, maybe they had no expectation of enjoying.

Similarly, Anne wanted her students 'to feel enthused by it […] because of the modernised element of the productions I hope it will demystify it a little bit and make it feel more relevant'. Harry told me that 'it's quite nice for the students to see a play without having to study it or it becomes a school thing', while Persephone stated, 'it's fun [and] it enhances their understanding'. Clearly, the idea that students can enjoy Shakespeare in performance is important to these teachers, even where the students have not studied the play they see, with the hope that a visceral experience of Shakespeare rather than an intellectual one might then feed in to an appreciation of the plays studied as texts in school.

Practical preparations in lessons for the theatre visit were more varied between schools. In Henslowe Academy, where the students were studying the play in lessons, Persephone arranged in-school workshops for the whole year group, so that the students would have the opportunity to explore the play further before seeing it performed. These workshops are explored in section 5.3.3 and section 6.5.2. Harry (Dekker High School) told me that he had also wanted to arrange workshops for his students, but had not found a suitable time in the school calendar to fit them in. He said that 'sometimes' the teachers would gather all the students together to introduce the play, but more usually the students would be asked to find out about it for themselves. Anne told me that although the students in The Massinger School were studying other Shakespeare plays, as the trip approached the teachers had 'done plot work' so that the students would know the story, often used as a comparison with the play that they were studying. She told me, 'I actually did some really interesting comparisons in terms of the kind of comedy genre', and added that another teacher had done some character comparisons with *Romeo and Juliet* in a similar way, showing that even where the PSwDB play is not currently being taught in school, it can add value to the teaching of other Shakespeare plays. David chose not to introduce the play to the students at Fletcher Comprehensive at all, in line with his desire for them to enjoy the theatre visit. He commented:

> it's tricky isn't it, because if I teach them the story then I'm teaching it and it's not what I want […] you're only going to get that genuine emotional reaction if you don't know the story […] it's not necessarily the knowledge that I'm after, it's the emotional reaction.

This range of approaches to preparing the students for seeing the production meant that they would have very different levels of knowledge of the play, which suggested that their understanding of it in performance might also vary.

Some of the students also told me how they had been prepared by their teachers for seeing the play. Their comments suggested that although the teachers interviewed had determined each school's overall approach to the trip, other teachers had added activities in their lessons to further prepare their own classes. London (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me that his teacher showed his class a film of the play so that they knew the plot before seeing the live production. Sam and Alice, also at Fletcher Comprehensive, were given 'a brief summary' of the plot by their teacher, and Zygmunt, in another class, said he had no input at all from his teacher to prepare for the trip. The students at The Massinger School had studied the play lower down the school, and said that they watched a film to remind them of the story. Jennifer (Dekker High School) told me that her teacher had explained the plot to her class before the visit, since they had not studied the play.

Some students also did some independent research before the theatre visit, although they said that they had not been asked to do so. Jennifer said that she had read the story, and Alonya (Dekker High School) told me that she had tried to research the plot on the internet, but did not understand much more than that it was going to be 'something about love'. Selena (The Massinger School) had looked up images of Shakespeare's Globe on the internet, to get an idea of what the theatre would be like, in contrast with Donny (Henslowe Academy), who seemed shocked when Akinfenwa told him that 'there's no seats, there's no roof' and that they might get wet if it rained. The students' comments suggest that even though most of them had been prepared for the play they would see, they were not necessarily prepared for the physical conditions of Shakespeare's Globe.

The introductory work done in the schools involved in this research suggests that individual class teachers do not always have the confidence that their students will understand Shakespeare without their support, even where the teachers overseeing the trip wanted their students to enjoy the play without any preparation. After the theatre visit, students were asked how their prior knowledge of the play had affected their understanding of the production. Their comments

are discussed in section 6.3.1 and demonstrate the importance of preparation before the theatre visit for most students.

4.6 Conclusion

The students in this study offered a wide range of thoughts and opinions about studying Shakespeare in school, and about their experiences of his plays outside of their lessons. The most important influence on most of them is clearly their English teacher, and the way that Shakespeare is taught in school can have a demonstrable effect on many of them, reinforcing or changing their attitudes towards Shakespeare. For a few, the influence of home is strong, particularly in creating a positive attitude towards studying Shakespeare: being included in theatre trips and conversations at home by family members who enjoy seeing and discussing the plays appears to create a positive example of how Shakespeare can be more than a school subject. Conversely, not discussing Shakespeare at home, or only discussing his plays in relation to school lessons and homework, seems to reinforce his position as a school subject for examination.

Experiences of Shakespeare in performance are wide-ranging but dominated by film versions. While a few students watch Shakespeare films at home, the majority see films or film clips as a way of understanding the plot or seeing how characters behave, often interpreting this as the correct way to perform the play. Expectations for a live theatre production are not based on experience for most of them, reflecting instead a focus on Shakespeare's historical context and an awareness of his value in society, even if most students do not speak in those terms. Preparation for the theatre visit in school was varied, focusing on the play but apparently not on the theatre environment, according to the students themselves. As a result, the experience of visiting Shakespeare's Globe for the 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, while happily anticipated by some, offered these students a large novelty space (Orion and Hofstein, 1994), with a different type of theatre to ones that they may have visited before, as well as a live performance of a Shakespeare play, which for most of them was a new experience.

5 Much Ado About Nothing 2018

'The revellers are entering, brother, make good room.'

Much Ado About Nothing (2.1.70)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to answer the third and fourth research sub-questions, which ask:

> How is the production designed by Shakespeare's Globe to meet the perceived needs of the students who attend?
>
> and
>
> How do students appear to respond to the theatre and the production during their visit?

It provides context for the 2018 Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) production of *Much Ado About Nothing* through interviews with key members of staff at Shakespeare's Globe and observations of preparations for the project. Observations of the students in their workshops and particularly watching the play are central to this chapter. It ends with reflections from the director Michael Oakley, Learning Consultant Tom Davey, and a volunteer theatre steward, Imogen[22], in preparation for the students' reflections on the project explored in Chapter 6.

5.2 Preparation for PSwDB 2018

Much Ado About Nothing was chosen as the play for PSwDB 2018 in June 2017. Michael Oakley was selected as director and worked with Globe Education to develop a coherent programme of provision for schools. Schools could apply for tickets from September 2017 and could then book continuing professional development (CPD) sessions for their teachers and in-school workshops for their students. The microsite related to this production was accessible from February 2018, offering additional information and activities for use in the classroom.

This section is based on the data generated by an interview with Patrick Spottiswoode, Director of Education at Shakespeare's Globe, and observations undertaken during the planning of the theatre production and the ancillary provision. These demonstrate the attention paid by Globe Education staff to the perceived needs of the students in the audience and offer some production-specific context for the students' own reactions to the performances they saw. The observations include the production planning meeting where Oakley explained his ideas for the

[22] Imogen is a pseudonym chosen by the Volunteer Steward for the purposes of anonymity.

production to Davey and Georghia Ellinas, Head of Learning at Globe Education, to help them design the content for the CPD and student workshops; and two training sessions for Globe Education Practitioners (GEPs) in preparation for their delivery of the student workshops in schools.

5.2.1 Interview with Patrick Spottiswoode, Director of Education at Shakespeare's Globe

I interviewed Patrick Spottiswoode in June 2017, shortly after the play choice for PSwDB 2018 had been announced. He explained how Globe Education had developed and how the current relationship between his department and Deutsche Bank had become established, and then spoke about the values of PSwDB productions and the constraints within which each director has to work. His comments on play choice and on the free ticket offer relate directly to the students' prior experiences of Shakespeare discussed in Chapter 4.

Spottiswoode said that education provision has always been central to Shakespeare's Globe's ethos, going back to the founder of Shakespeare's Globe Sam Wanamaker's belief that everyone has an entitlement to engage with the arts and that education programmes enable this engagement. The relationship with the local community in Southwark is also important for Spottiswoode, particularly since there was controversy over the siting of Shakespeare's Globe on land that Southwark Council wanted to use for social housing (Drakakis, 1988; Holderness, 1988), but he admitted that 'community for us has tended to mean schools'.

Globe Education calls its programme for schools 'Lively Action', and Spottiswoode said that this is purposefully chosen to highlight the need to approach Shakespeare's plays as physicalised drama rather than as written texts: teachers should 'teach the play *as play,* engage the child with the play *as play*'. His use of 'play' as both noun and verb emphasises his view that exploring Shakespeare's plays through drama activities should be prioritised over sitting reading the text. He admitted, 'obviously we've got the barrier of language', one of the areas identified as a problem for students (see section 2.4), but suggested that play can overcome that problem. The perceived dichotomy of active play and desk-bound study implied by these comments situates Globe Education firmly at one end of the spectrum of approaches to teaching Shakespeare (section 2.4).

The relationship with Deutsche Bank and the development of PSwDB is outlined in section 1.4. Spottiswoode clearly sees PSwDB as organic, saying, 'we're constantly looking at it and thinking "how can we adapt/change/develop this and how can it grow?"'. Globe Education's choice to 'do plays outside of the top four, top five' that schools traditionally study demonstrates how Globe Education continually updates its provision for schools in order to continue improving its

output and reach, although the choice of *Much Ado About Nothing* for the 2018 production demonstrated a return to a play more commonly studied in schools. I suggested that this play might be considered a 'safe' choice that would guarantee strong audience numbers; Spottiswoode agreed that the play could be seen in that light, but commented that for most students, 'this will be their first Shakespeare'. Choosing one of the few plays that are regularly taught in schools and are on the GCSE examination specifications also delivers PSwDB's core aim of supporting in-school studies of Shakespeare through relevant provision (see section 1.4).

Spottiswoode said that cutting the text to fit the 90-minute performance time is not a problem, as long as the production does 'justice to the play' and excites the students, without modernising the language: the script must keep Shakespeare's original words. He told me that from its inception, PSwDB had been designed to connect with its student audiences by including contemporary references, making their experiences 'creative and exciting' and countering the idea that '"it's not for me, I'm not going to understand it"'. He admitted to not always being comfortable with a director's choices but suggested that contemporary references can be viewed as an original practice[23], since Elizabethan performers wore contemporary dress and would have probably sung songs their audiences knew. In his view, the production needs to provoke a reaction in the students, and if some of them dislike the contemporary elements, that is still positive: any response shows engagement with the production, regardless of what that response is.

I asked what might happen if Deutsche Bank were to withdraw their financial support, and Spottiswoode seemed convinced that another partner would be found, since 'the motive behind this project' would still be there. He remembers overhearing a boy leaving the theatre who commented, 'I knew I didn't like Shakespeare [but] now I know I was wrong'. For Spottiswoode, that anecdote proves that PSwDB is a success.

5.2.2 Director Michael Oakley's proposals for PSwDB 2018

Director Michael Oakley explored his proposals for the production with Tom Davey, in his role as Assistant Director alongside his role as Learning Consultant, and Georghia Ellinas, Head of Learning at Shakespeare's Globe, in early November 2017, to enable them to prepare a coherent programme of ancillary provision for schools. Auditions were underway, and although some concepts such as the use of mobile phones had already been highlighted in marketing materials for the production, this meeting gave Oakley the opportunity to discuss his edited script and

[23] 'Original practices' refers to productions that 'recreate or replicate as many performance practices of Shakespeare's company who occupied the original Globe Theatres' as possible (The Shakespeare Globe Trust, 2019a).

comment on key themes in detail. Davey and Ellinas would then be able to finalise the plan for the CPD sessions that were scheduled to begin the following week. This planning meeting offered a reference point for my subsequent theatre observations (section 5.3.4) and the students' post-theatre visit reflections in their questionnaires and interviews (Chapter 6).

A synopsis of the full play can be found in Appendix VI.iii. Briefly, the story concerns two couples. The first, Claudio and Hero, are betrothed, but a trick played on Claudio causes him to reject Hero publicly at their wedding, accusing her of infidelity. The second, Benedick and Beatrice, become betrothed after a trick is played on them, convincing each of the other's love, having both previously sworn that they will never marry. After members of the Watch, tasked with keeping order during the night before the wedding, overhear the villains boasting about tricking Claudio, the truth is made known and Claudio is reconciled to Hero at the end of the play, with plans to marry alongside Beatrice and Benedick.

Oakley's focus for the production was to create a positive experience of live Shakespeare for the students in the audience with frequent inclusion of references to contemporary popular culture in telling the story. In particular, he said, 'the ultimate question I would like every member in the audience to ask themselves is could they forgive Claudio?' The key themes that he wanted to draw out for the students were gender roles in society, the effects of slander and gossip, and forgiveness. There would also be a number of 'big moments' during the production to keep the students focused, created particularly by costumes and music.

5.2.2.1 The presentation of gender

Oakley identified gender as a theme that would be particularly relevant to students in the audience. He described Beatrice as 'sassy […] a modern woman in every sense of the word', and suggested that the contrast between Beatrice and Benedick also shows how differently men and women are perceived by society, demonstrated by their 'merry war' (1.1.50). He said that Benedick wins 'round one', the verbal contest in 1.1, but he wanted the audience to know that Beatrice is 'out for revenge', and will win 'round two', in this production a physical dance-off during the ball at Leonato's house in 2.1. Beatrice's later rejection of Don Pedro's marriage proposal (2.1.285-287) further underlines how she refuses to conform to what is expected of her, in Oakley's view, making her a role model for young people. Ellinas commented that gendered expectations of behaviour are still very present for some young people, particularly in cultures where being male or being the eldest carries added importance, making this theme directly relevant to their lives.

Oakley suggested that Hero, in contrast with Beatrice, conforms to social expectations of women in front of the male characters in the play. However, when she is only with other women, she is

'just as witty and vivacious and expressive as Beatrice'. He commented that the language in the play is tied to the presentation of gender: when the men are alone, their language is very different, with boisterous male joking dominated by sexual imagery. Davey suggested at this point that this links directly with the way the students themselves talk in different groups, such as 'the way boys talk when they're together and the way you talk as soon as a girl arrives on the scene'.

Additionally, Oakley said that he was exploring the idea of 50-50 gender casting, in line with Artistic Director designate Michelle Terry's expressed intention for main season productions at Shakespeare's Globe (Brown, 2017). This would also affect the presentation of gender in the play. He was considering casting a woman in the villain Don John's role, to avoid stereotyping all men in the play as villains and all women as 'superhuman'.

5.2.2.2 Lies, slander and gossip in the play

Don John's character is particularly important for Oakley in showing how gossip, lies and slander are closely connected. Don John tricks Claudio twice to prevent him from marrying Hero, first lying that Don Pedro has wooed her for himself, and then that she has been unfaithful. Oakley described in detail his proposal to use mobile phones for the slander of Hero which is at the heart of the second of these tricks. Filmed 'evidence' would be used to defame her character, demonstrating how images can be used to manipulate someone, without giving Hero the opportunity to reply. Oakley hoped that by planting phones earlier in the production at a couple of key moments, the students in the audience would readily accept them as part of the world of the play, and therefore as a credible means of tricking Claudio into believing the slander. The use of phones would also be directly relevant to the lives of the student audience.

Oakley also wanted to make the gulling scenes (2.3 and 3.1) convincing for the audience. He said that these scenes are strategically important but often make Beatrice and Benedick look ridiculous, and would need to move quickly to the soliloquy at the end of each one in order to keep the students focused. In particular, the second gulling scene that leads to Beatrice asking, 'Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?' (3.1.109) must be believable. Oakley suggested that this scenario is all too familiar to girls who overhear gossip about themselves, and he hoped that the treatment of both Beatrice and Hero by those who were supposed to love them would resonate with the students in the audience.

5.2.2.3 Forgiveness and sympathy for Claudio

Oakley said that the key to having the audience believe that Claudio believes himself wronged is to have the students love Claudio from the beginning of the play, otherwise his later behaviour does not make sense. Oakley said, 'I want him to be very gauche and sort of a bit doe-eyed' but

with darkness underneath, so that Claudio is believable both when loving and then when hating Hero. He suggested that when the truth about Hero is made public, Don Pedro and Claudio should kneel before her father Leonato, showing their submission to him as part of their repentance for killing Hero, whom they still believe to be dead, in a reversal of Leonato's submission to Don Pedro at the beginning of the play. This idea demonstrated how Oakley had thought carefully about the use of visual symbolism to show the nature of different characters' behaviour, to help the students understand the play.

Oakley suggested that the penultimate scene at Hero's tomb (5.3) is particularly important in this regard. He said, 'I think it's important [Claudio] cries', and wondered if he should try to jump into the grave during the eulogy (5.3.3-10). Bringing in Hero above (not an entry mentioned in the text), to see Claudio's breakdown, would also add credibility to her decision to forgive him. Without such a radical change, Oakley said that the end of the play becomes 'uncomfortable', with no true repentance; an added bonus would come from showing the young audience that tears are not just for women, implying that he believes that young people in 2018 see tears as unmanly and again emphasising the presentation of gender as a key theme in the play.

The final moment of forgiveness that Oakley wanted to highlight was Benedick's line 'come, come, we are friends' (5.4.112). Oakley asked if this is addressed to Claudio or to Beatrice, as if Benedick still needs to convince Beatrice to forgive Claudio. Davey suggested that seeing her consciously choose to forgive Claudio would be more in line with her character, and since 'the audience *are* Beatrice' at that moment, they will follow her lead and forgive Claudio too.

5.2.2.4 'Big moments' to keep the students' attention

Throughout the play, Oakley had planned for a number of 'big moments' that would draw any waning attention in the audience back to the production. The first of these would be Don Pedro's triumphant procession through the yard in 1.1. This procession would involve the audience in the performance from the beginning of the play, encouraging them to participate in meaning-making rather than to simply spectate. Oakley intended to use the yard for several entrances during each performance, to encourage this active participation in the production. The opening scene could also end with a group selfie, to introduce mobile phones into the world of the play in preparation for Don John's second trick on Claudio.

The next 'big moment' would occur with the entrance of the revellers at Leonato's party. For Oakley, since the soldiers were triumphant at the beginning of the play, they were easily identifiable as superheroes, and their costumes should therefore be symbolic of their status and characters: Don Pedro as Batman and Claudio as his sidekick Robin, Benedick as The Flash, Borachio as Spiderman, and Don John, if cast as a woman, as Catwoman. Oakley echoed

Spottiswoode's view (section 5.2.1) that including contemporary references could legitimately be seen as an original practice from Elizabethan times. The costumes, music and dancing at this point would hopefully create a strong reaction in the students, keeping their attention and encouraging further participation by basing the choreography on the electric slide, a dance that he believed many of them would know.

Claudio and Hero's wedding would provide the next 'big moment', full of glamour, with the soldiers in dress uniforms and Hero in a designer wedding dress. Oakley wanted the two groups to enter ceremonially through the yard, to heighten the impact of Hero's subsequent humiliation. He already had a clear idea of how the scene should be staged, with Hero centre-stage, her back to the audience, isolated from the others. Beatrice would be on one side, held back by the men so that she could not support her cousin. The scene should then move quickly to Benedick's decision to stay with the women rather than following Don Pedro and Claudio, and his declaration of love for Beatrice. Oakley did not want Benedick and Beatrice to kiss, however, as the reaction from the students would be unhelpful and it might seem that Beatrice was using her sexuality to convince Benedick to challenge Claudio, which he felt would be contrary to her personality. Her line, 'Kill Claudio' (4.1.287) would need to be completely serious if the audience were to believe she meant it.

The final 'big moment' would be the tomb scene (5.3), with the soldiers again dressed in their ceremonial uniforms to show their regret for Hero's death. This would lead on to the resolution of the play and the final dance, which would be a reprise of the electric slide and would, Oakley hoped, encourage the students to join in.

5.2.2.5 Strategies for specific scenes

Oakley clearly wanted to make the play as accessible as possible for his student audience, recognising that some scenes in the play can be problematic for understanding the story. One such scene is Act 1 Scene 3, where Don John shows his hatred for his brother, Don Pedro. Oakley said that the only line that helps to explain their relationship is when Leonato says, 'being reconciled to the prince your brother: I owe you all duty' (1.1.125-126), and during rehearsals he would need to explore how to show this relationship clearly on stage. Having Don John arrive in hand-cuffs, as in Joss Whedon's 2012 film of the play, was one option he was considering.

Another such scene is where Borachio sets up the second trick to deceive Claudio. The text implies that this is not seen, but Oakley felt he needed to include some indication on-stage to show that it had taken place. He was determined not to follow 'most productions' which included suggestive miming silhouetted in a window, but did not yet have a clear idea of how to show to the audience that the trick had been carried out.

The presentation of the comic constable Dogberry and his sidekick Verges can also be difficult. Oakley wanted them to be security guards or bodyguards, rather than police, since they did not have the power to arrest or prosecute the law. Oakley had already determined that Verges would need to be doubled with Margaret so would have to be female, and if he was to pursue equal gendered casting, Dogberry would also be female. He suggested that Dogberry's malapropisms come from being overawed by working for people of high status. Dogberry has the chance to save the wedding, but Leonato is distracted and does not listen to him. For Oakley this scene is pivotal to the story, but is often 'completely washed over'; he was confident that he could make the students fully aware of its dramatic irony.

5.2.2.6 Production design

Oakley had clear ideas for the design of the production. The costumes were particularly important, and he spoke about 'dress[ing] the occasion', making sure that status and emotions were strongly conveyed by the visual appearance of the characters at different points in the play. Changes of costume, such as the soldiers changing from modern army fatigues to dress uniforms and back, could indicate solemnity and ritual, and the use of superhero costumes would relate directly to different characters' personalities. Benedick, as the character who changes the most in the play, should have the most dramatic changes in costume. After the first gulling scene, Oakley wanted the audience to see 'a real transformation from this rugged man to this fashion model or an attempt at fashion', as Benedick changes from soldier to lover, something for which Benedick had previously loudly criticised Claudio. After resigning from the army, Benedick would no longer appear in uniform, symbolising his separation from Don Pedro.

The women's clothes throughout would be modern and glamorous. However, their costumes for the final scene, when they enter masked, were undecided at the time of this meeting. Oakley had considered Wonder Woman costumes, but these, he felt, were too sexualised and would therefore result in a reaction from that audience that Davey suggested would be 'unhelpful'. As before, however, Oakley wanted the costumes to carry symbolism, since the women were now saving the men, tying in with Hero's name. The effect should therefore be 'cultivated' and 'powerful' for 'such a serious moment'. The women's costumes worn during the production run can be seen in Figure 10 on page 152 of this thesis: blue hooded capes over matching floor-length blue dresses and masks to hide their identities.

While the costumes were clearly designed to carry symbolic meaning, Oakley wanted to keep the staging very simple, linking the yard with the stage and the stage with the balcony by adding staircases, but otherwise not adding anything to the space. He believed that the stairs would provide a good focal point for audience members at the sides of the stage and the different levels would add a sense of grandeur for Leonato's home. In addition, for Hero's grave, Oakley

wanted to 'open the trap [door in the stage] so that we can expose all [that] the Globe can do', but did not want to extend the stage into the yard, as has been done for other productions, because he felt that the stage as it is would be enough to attract the students' attention; he also suggested that the acoustics change once actors are out under the opening in the centre of the theatre.

5.2.2.7 Music

For Oakley, music is an integral part of Shakespeare's plays. He wanted the students to understand that 'Shakespeare uses music to emote and to comment on; it's not just decorative'. Composer Olly Fox, who had worked on several previous productions at Shakespeare's Globe, had been commissioned to write music specifically for this production. Apart from the party at Leonato's house, music is needed for Balthasar's song at the beginning of the first gulling scene (2.3), during the tomb scene (5.3), and at the end of the play when Benedick cries, 'Strike up, pipers' (5.4.122). Unlike in other years, this PSwDB production had new music but no songs from elsewhere.

Oakley's comments on music in the planning meeting focused mostly on Balthasar's song (2.3.56-71). He wanted this to be sung by Hero, Beatrice and Margaret, calling it 'a wonderful, feminist song […] "Men were deceivers ever"'. In particular, Hero singing it in front of Claudio could be seen as a warning that he does not pick up on, linking with the theme of slander and gossip discussed above. The music would offer 'another moment' as well, keeping the students' interest at a point in the play that can become quite wordy.

The final dance after the resolution of the play was planned to be a reprise of the electric slide, providing a final 'big moment' for the students and perhaps encouraging them to join in. It was hoped that this would create an uplifting end to the play and ensure that the students would leave feeling positive about seeing Shakespeare performed live.

5.2.2.8 Summary

Oakley's proposals demonstrated his aim to provide a positive and exciting experience of seeing Shakespeare performed live for his student audiences. His chosen key themes and 'big moments' in the production were important for developing the ancillary provision for schools, and offered a point of reference for my observations of the production (section 5.3). They also suggested possible topics for reflection in my post-theatre visit questionnaires and interviews.

5.2.3 Training the Globe Education Practitioners

Globe Education Practitioners (GEPs) facilitate workshops for Globe Education. They are experienced actor-teachers in the tradition of TIE (Theatre in Education) (see section 2.3.4). As described in Chapter 1, however, PSwDB workshops differ from Globe Education's stand-alone

'Lively Action' workshops in two ways. First, PSwDB workshops are part of a coherent theatre programme, rather than stand-alone events, taking place before the theatre visit itself. They must therefore be carefully planned to reflect the key themes and ideas highlighted by the theatre production, while offering different activities to the other ancillary provision. Second, they take place in schools rather than at Shakespeare's Globe itself; the unfamiliar environment in which the workshops are held may therefore present difficulties for which the GEPs are unable to prepare, such as the size of the space.

Training was provided to introduce the GEPs to PSwDB and to the key themes that Globe Education wanted to draw out from the production. This training took place over two evenings. The first evening consisted of a lecture by Dr. Will Tosh, Research Fellow at Shakespeare's Globe, followed by a language workshop led by Giles Block, Globe Associate in charge of text. The second evening was a practical workshop led by Tom Davey in his role as Learning Consultant, giving more detail about PSwDB as a project and suggesting some activities that would be suitable for use with students in the in-school workshops. The GEPs were then expected to create their own workshop plans to submit to Davey for comment, based on the training they had received but without repeating any of the material or activities covered in the CPD sessions.

5.2.3.1 Much Ado About Nothing Lecture

Tosh's lecture, based on suggestions from Head of Learning Georghia Ellinas after the planning meeting with Oakley and Davey, focused on two of the key themes emphasised in Oakley's proposals: gender and slander. Tosh began by comparing *Much Ado About Nothing* with *The Taming of the Shrew*, in that both contain strong women who appear to be subject to the patriarchal hegemony of the society in which they live. However, he quickly revealed such comparisons to be superficial, commenting that while *The Taming of the Shrew* is inherently problematic for contemporary society in its forceful oppression of Katherine's spirit, *Much Ado About Nothing* remains popular, and Beatrice's spirit is attractive to those around her.

Tosh summed up the play's themes as 'accusation, false speech, the power of words, and female and male sexual reputation' (Tosh, 2017). He said that the slander in *Much Ado About Nothing* is sometimes comic, but is also lethal, and likened it to trolling on the internet in 21st century society, giving an insight into how GEPs might make this aspect of the play relevant to the young people in the workshops.

The lecture and the discussion it provoked made clear how much detailed knowledge of the play and its context is expected of the GEPs. For those who did not previously know this play well, the lecture also provided a solid basis for their own explorations of the text in the ensuing training.

5.2.3.2 Language training

The training with Giles Block that followed Tosh's lecture focused on speaking the text aloud. Each GEP was given a few pages of text to demonstrate the key points that Block wanted to draw out, that they could then take into the workshops with the school students.

First, Block highlighted the unusually high quantity of prose in the play: out of 2550 lines, 72% are prose, including the first 270 lines of the play. An extract from the text was then used to demonstrate the difference between prose and verse, showing how the mood changes with the text type. He said that prose is often believed to represent good, honest working people, or the comic characters in plays, while verse is seen as formal, polite language. However, he suggested that this is a false division, and demonstrated in *Much Ado About Nothing* how verse is the 'sound of sincerity', such as when Beatrice says 'What fire is in mine ears?' (3.1.108) after being gulled, contrasting with prose which often is used for evasion and prevarication.

Block also demonstrated how important some elements of text are in creating an understanding of the relationships between characters, in particular the use of 'thou' and 'you', with 'thou' being more intimate, while 'you' is more formal and creates distance, although 'thou' can also be used for cursing. In 4.1, after Benedick and Beatrice declare their love for each other, Benedick begins to use 'thou' and 'thee' towards Beatrice, although she maintains the use of 'you' towards him. This small change indicates a more substantial one in their relationship.

The use of language was the subject of one of the academic essays included on the microsite and in the theatre programme for this production, and was therefore clearly an important aspect of the ancillary provision for schools. However, Block's focus on Benedick and Beatrice was less helpful to the GEPs in that it repeated some of the content of the CPD for teachers which I had also observed; it would therefore need to be adapted for the workshops for students, which were to focus on Claudio and Hero.

5.2.3.3 Workshop training

The second evening of training began with a detailed explanation of PSwDB and of how the in-school workshops fit into the overall programme. Davey highlighted several key aspects of which the GEPs needed to be aware. First, the workshops are specifically to prepare students for attending the performance and should act as a trailer for seeing the play, to draw the students into the story. Second, GCSE English exams require a personal response to texts, therefore all students must be involved in the workshop. Third, these workshops are different because they are held in schools, on the students' own territory, so the space and the behaviour of the students might be very different to the groups that come to Shakespeare's Globe for 'Lively Action' workshops. Davey added that 80% of the PSwDB workshops are for Key Stage 3 students.

As an experienced practitioner, Davey seemed to want the GEPs to understand that these workshops are not always straightforward, and to be realistic about what to expect from the students they would meet.

Davey explained Oakley's vision for the production to the GEPs, in particular his ideas about gender, slander and forgiveness, all of which could be fruitful topics for discussion with students in schools. He also explained how mobile phones were going to be used for the trick at the centre of the play. He then led a collaborative discussion, which included a range of practical activities, on how the text could be introduced to and used with students in schools, such as using individual lines of text out of context to provoke debate and action. He also emphasised that the workshops should focus on Claudio and Hero, to avoid any repetition of the content of the CPD for teachers, which focused on Benedick and Beatrice.

One GEP asked about students bringing up the sexual innuendo in the play, showing an awareness of the target age group, but Davey encouraged the GEPs to throw difficult questions back at the students for them to explain. He also commented that the teacher present should support them with any behaviour problems amongst the students or reluctance to get involved, and suggested that they keep small groups within each workshop to a maximum of five students to help them maintain focus. He told the GEPs to make clear to students that these are not acting workshops but text explorations, so they are not expected to act well but to create strong images that represent the words on the page.

5.2.3.4 Summary

The combination of Tosh's lecture on some of the key themes in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Block's language workshop and Davey's practical training seemed to give the GEPs a wide range of information and ideas from which to create their own workshop plans. Their questions and comments throughout the training showed many of them to be experienced actor-teachers who clearly understood their brief. The time given to this training emphasised the importance of the workshops within the PSwDB programme. Observing the delivery of workshops was therefore also important as part of this research (see section 5.3.3).

5.3 Implementing PSwDB 2018

A school participating in all the elements of PSwDB would first take part in a CPD session, would then use the microsite in lessons and organise in-school workshops for the students, and would subsequently visit Shakespeare's Globe for the theatre production. This section is organized to follow that experience of the project. It is based on my observations of one CPD session for teachers; six of the seven workshops delivered to students at Henslowe Academy, the only school involved in this research to book workshops; and nine performances of *Much Ado About*

Nothing across the production run. I also explore the microsite created to accompany the 2018 production. The students' and teachers' comments on the CPD, workshops and microsite are discussed in section 6.5.

5.3.1 Continuing professional development sessions for teachers

I attended one continuing professional development (CPD) session for teachers as an observer. This training was intended to introduce teachers to activities that they could use in their own lessons, to help with teaching Shakespeare's plays. There were no teachers from the schools participating in my research at this session, but it provided an example of the training that those who attended other sessions would have received. Training was held at Shakespeare's Globe, timed to begin at 5pm and finish by 8pm, to make it accessible for working teachers.

The training began with a brief tour of the theatre. Each teacher was then given a pack containing workshop materials, including a brief history of theatre in Shakespeare's time; extracts from the play text; and advertising flyers for the production itself, the 2018 microsite, teaching resources available on Globe Education's main website, further opportunities for CPD for teachers and workshops for students not related to PSwDB, and Globe Education's *Shorter Shakespeare* editions of some of Shakespeare's plays, based on the scripts used for PSwDB productions. There was also an evaluation sheet for each teacher to complete at the end of the evening.

The workshop began with a demonstration of activities on the microsite for *The Taming of the Shrew* (The Shakespeare Globe Trust, 2017), since the microsite for *Much Ado About Nothing* was not yet live, to show the type of resources that would be available for teachers to use in lessons prior to bringing their students to see the production. The evening then continued with drama activities, with the teachers taking the role that would be taken by their students in school. Activities started with images, progressed to using single lines of text, and then to using several lines of text at a time, aiming to show how learners can engage with Shakespeare's plays without being presented with a whole play in book form.

The workshop focused on Beatrice and Benedick. Although the CPD sessions took place before the training for the GEPs, the decision had already been taken to ask the GEPs to focus on Hero and Claudio in the in-school workshops, to avoid repetition of content. This demonstrated clearly how Globe Education had planned the content of all the provision to create a coherent programme. For example, one activity started with a teacher reading Beatrice's speech beginning 'What fire is in mine ears?' (3.1.108), while the other teachers stood in a circle around her. When they believed she was sincere, they took a step towards her; when they doubted her, they stepped back. At the end of the speech, the participants were asked to note their positions

and to justify their choices. This activity directly related to the work Block did with the GEPs and the essay about language that was later included on the microsite and in the theatre programme.

The teachers were introduced to a range of activities adapted for use in a school classroom. They appeared to enjoy the workshop, but as these particular teachers were not participating in my research, I was not able to speak to them further about whether it had had any effect on their teaching.

5.3.2 The microsite

The microsite was designed to support the in-school study of *Much Ado About Nothing* and to act as an introduction to this production of the play. At the time of writing (May 2020), the microsite for PSwDB 2018 is still available at http://2018.playingshakespeare.org/ and an internet search suggests that all similar PSwDB microsites back to the 2008 production of *Much Ado About Nothing* are also still accessible. Designed by the digital team who oversee all Shakespeare's Globe's website content, rather than by the director, its reach is potentially greater than the theatre production as the microsite is available to all schools regardless of whether they take students to see the play or not.

Content was added to the site weekly, over an eight-week period, showing the development of the production through rehearsals in February and during the performances in March. This was intended to encourage teachers and students to return to the site several times to see the latest blog posts and engage with the activities posted there. A map showing the relationships between characters, biographies for each character and interviews with each actor were included to give further information about this specific production. The interviews were conducted in Week 1 of rehearsals, with a suggestion that there were going to be further interviews later on in the project, but none were added. This implies that the microsite is possibly not always a priority for the digital team and that there is potential for further development, particularly as it offers a continued source of material for schools after the production run has finished.

The microsite also included a brief synopsis of the play, more detailed exploration of key scenes, and suggested activities for teachers to use in lessons. The key scenes were 1.1 which sets up the action of the play, 4.1 where Hero is shamed at the altar, and 5.4 which offers the resolution to the plot. The choice of these three scenes focuses the students on Hero and Claudio, in line with the discussion at the planning meeting I observed, but misses several other scenes which could also be deemed important; while the first two of these scenes include two of Oakley's 'big moments', they do not include the party in 2.1 or the tomb scene in 5.3 that Oakley also

identified as 'big moments' for his audiences. The suggested activities for exploring the key scenes on the microsite covered all key stages in secondary school, but mostly focused on content found elsewhere on the site, such as the two essays written by academics at Shakespeare's Globe on gender and on the use of prose and verse in the play; these were also printed in the theatre programme given to all students who attended the production.

Although the microsite is intended to stand alongside the production, its availability as a resource for teachers and students who did not see the production is clearly important in understanding its value. However, the limited discussion of key scenes and the focus of activities on the microsite's own content also restrict its usefulness for study of the whole play. Statistics for microsite usage were not available at the time of writing.

5.3.3 The workshops

Henslowe Academy was the only school participating in this research that booked the free in-school workshops offered as part of the PSwDB programme. Persephone, the Head of English, asked for workshops for the whole year group of 180 students, divided into seven groups. The free offer is for up to three workshops, each for a maximum of 30 students; the cost of the additional four workshops was divided across the whole year group. I observed six of these across two days, each facilitated by the same GEP, Adam[24].

Each workshop began with some warm-up games, with the students standing in a circle facing inwards. In most of the workshops I observed, the teacher in charge of the group joined in with these games, resulting in a much better level of focus from the students; in the first workshop, the teacher did not get involved at all, even when the students needed some discipline, and it seemed much harder to keep this group on task.

The workshops focused on Hero and Claudio's relationship, and looked at the words they speak to each other during Claudio's public shaming of Hero in Act 4. The students began by considering what the name 'Hero' means, and what characteristics a hero might have. They were then encouraged to have a go at speaking some text, given to them on a single sheet of A4 paper, even if they did not understand some of the words. They also looked at the balance of speech, noting that Claudio says far more than Hero in this scene. The workshop ended with students creating still images of Claudio in small groups and acting out short extracts using gestures and movement to explore negative and positive words. The focus on text extracts explored through physical activity seemed to make the language accessible to the students, helping them to develop more personal responses to the play.

[24] Adam chose to use his own name in this research rather than using a pseudonym.

In the first workshop, the students disagreed over what Hero's lack of speech might mean. One student suggested that Hero says only one line so does not really love Claudio, while another offered the view that her actual words are 'I do' and she agrees to marry Claudio, so although she says very little, her words are positive. Similarly, in the second workshop, one student commented, 'Claudio likes Hero more than Hero likes Claudio […] he says more than her', while another said, 'Hero is a bit shy. Claudio expresses his feelings. All she does is agree'. In the third workshop, a student suggested that the marriage might be her father's decision, 'like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', and in the penultimate workshop students focused much more on how Claudio's language objectifies Hero, suggesting that he wants to possess her. The final group of students had studied most of the play and knew more context than the previous groups. One student offered 'back in the time men were above women' as an excuse for the disparity between Claudio and Hero's speeches. These comments seemed to show that some students were developing new ideas about the text, interpreting it in different ways and demonstrating the kind of personal response required by GCSE assessment objective 1 (see section 1.2). A small number of students were also able to make comparisons with other Shakespeare plays.

The comments from students after acting out lines from the play were also interesting. Those students who had not yet studied the whole play believed that Hero might really have been unfaithful to Claudio, concluding that she does not really love him. One commented that Claudio now understands what the downsides of being in love are, but most found his public shaming of Hero problematic, saying that he could have spoken to her in private, or asked her for her side of the story, or even lied to himself if he loved her that much. These students demonstrated a strong sense of right and wrong in their judgement of Claudio's behaviour: while many felt he was justified in breaking off his engagement to Hero, they did not agree with his method. In the final workshop, the use of gestures was found to be particularly effective, with students seeing that 'it was calm at the start and then it became aggressive', and suggesting that action 'gives the character more personality'. These comments support the view discussed in section 2.4 that exploring a Shakespeare play through drama activities adds to the students' understanding of the characters and language.

The number of activities varied in each workshop, depending on how focused the students were on listening to instructions and then carrying them out. This was where teacher intervention seemed especially important. The behaviour of some students suggested that they were uncomfortable in the open space of a drama studio or classroom with the chairs and tables pushed back. The teacher in one workshop suggested that the students are inherently 'lazy' and that their default position is to sit down or lean on something, but the pre-theatre visit

interviews support the view that this behaviour may have related more to discomfort from being in a different environment (see section 4.2.4.5). My observations also suggest that students were not always clear about the purpose of the workshops, leading to a reluctance of some students to participate in the activities offered that echoed the negative comments about drama made by some on questionnaire 1 (see section 4.2.4.5). How the relationship between teacher, GEP and students is constructed *before* the workshops take place seems to be crucial for creating a positive learning opportunity for the students taking part. Expectations need to be made explicit so that teachers can support the GEP in delivering the workshop and students can understand how the workshops support their learning.

5.3.4 The production

The focus of my observations was on the students attending the production itself. I attended the Open Dress rehearsal of the production on 22nd February, and then a further eight performances, including the first performance on 23rd February and the final performance on 21st March. There were 31 scheduled performances, although the performance on Friday 2nd March was cancelled, as heavy snowfall resulted in schools being closed across London. This section draws on all nine observations, commenting on students' behaviour in the theatre and reactions to the production act by act, following the plot of the play.

My observations are summarised in Table 9. Seating plans for Shakespeare's Globe can be found in Appendix VII. The weather for each performance is noted as it may have affected the students' experiences of visiting Shakespeare's Globe, owing to the open nature of the theatre. Attendance figures show the size of the audience, mostly consisting of large groups of students who knew each other, unlike main season audiences. Some of the effects of seating position, weather and audience size and structure are noted in my theatre observations (section 5.3.4.2) and were mentioned in post-theatre visit questionnaire responses and interviews (Chapter 6).

5.3.4.1 Arrival at the theatre

Each of the schools participating in this research travelled to Shakespeare's Globe on the London Underground, walking from nearby stations and gathering with other schools outside the theatre on the South Bank, where I met them. The journey is an integral part of a theatre visit, contributing to theatre literacy (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2013), and the excitement of the students gathering outside the theatre created a carnival atmosphere. It seemed unlikely that for most students their excitement derived from expectations about the theatre production itself, based on their responses to questionnaire 1 (see section 4.4); it may therefore have related to other contextual factors such as being on a school trip, being in Central London or being part of a large group of young people.

Table 9: Summary of Theatre Observations

	Date	Reason for attendance	Researcher's seating position	Weather	Total attendance
1	22/02/18	Open Dress Rehearsal (7pm)	Yard – standing (In front of Bay E)	Cold but clear; a chilly breeze	70
2	23/02/18	First performance	Yard – standing (In front of Bay J)	Very cold, dry, overcast with high cloud	Attendance not noted on Front of House report
3	26/02/18	Fletcher Comprehensive (half cohort) in Lower Gallery Bays A to E	Lower Gallery (Bay E, Row E)	Very cold, high cloud, occasional snow flurries	19 schools; 1269 attendees with 478 in the yard
4	05/03/18	Fletcher Comprehensive (half cohort) in Lower Gallery Bays A to E	Lower Gallery (Bay E, Row E)	Cold and dry with occasional sunshine	16 schools; 1267 attendees with 463 in the yard
5	08/03/18	Dekker High School in Lower Gallery Bays L to Q	Lower Gallery (Bay L, Row E)	Cold and cloudy with occasional sunshine; a chilly breeze	16 groups; 1363 attendees with 507 in the yard
6	09/03/18	The Massinger School in Lower and Middle Galleries Bays A to E	Lower Gallery (Bay E, Row E)	Started dry but overcast, raining hard by the end.	No Front of House report filed for this date
7	12/03/18	With research supervisors	Lower Gallery (Bay H, Row E)	Cold and rainy	16 groups; 1391 attendees with 595 in the yard
8	16/03/18	Henslowe Academy in the entire Upper Gallery	Upper Gallery (Bay Q, Front Row)	Sunny with clearing skies and much warmer than earlier performances	16 groups; 1157 attendees with 435 in the yard
9	21/03/18	Final performance	Lower Gallery (Bay J, Seat A36)	Cold but sunny	20 groups; 1393 attendees with 599 in the yard

While the school groups were gathering on the South Bank, Globe Education staff gave teachers batches of theatre programmes, one per student. The teachers were expected to hand these out amongst their students before the performance. Some did this immediately, but most teachers that I observed kept the programmes until they were inside the theatre and their students had sat down. The programmes were 24-page A4 booklets, with a picture of two mobile phones on the front cover, one showing Beatrice and the other showing Benedick (see Figure

1). Although Oakley had stressed the importance of Claudio and Hero as the main protagonists in his plans for this production, the programme design followed modern convention by foregrounding Beatrice and Benedick (Mares, 2003). It contained a list of the cast members and the creative team behind PSwDB 2018, including their photographs and a short biography for each person; the two academic essays that had also been included on the microsite; and an interview with Michael Oakley. The programme also contained quotations from the play, illustrations, and photographs of rehearsals, but did not contain a synopsis of the plot, which suggests a confidence in this production to communicate the story to the students without the need for guidance. It did, however, contain the address for the microsite in several places, encouraging students to access further information about the play and a synopsis online.

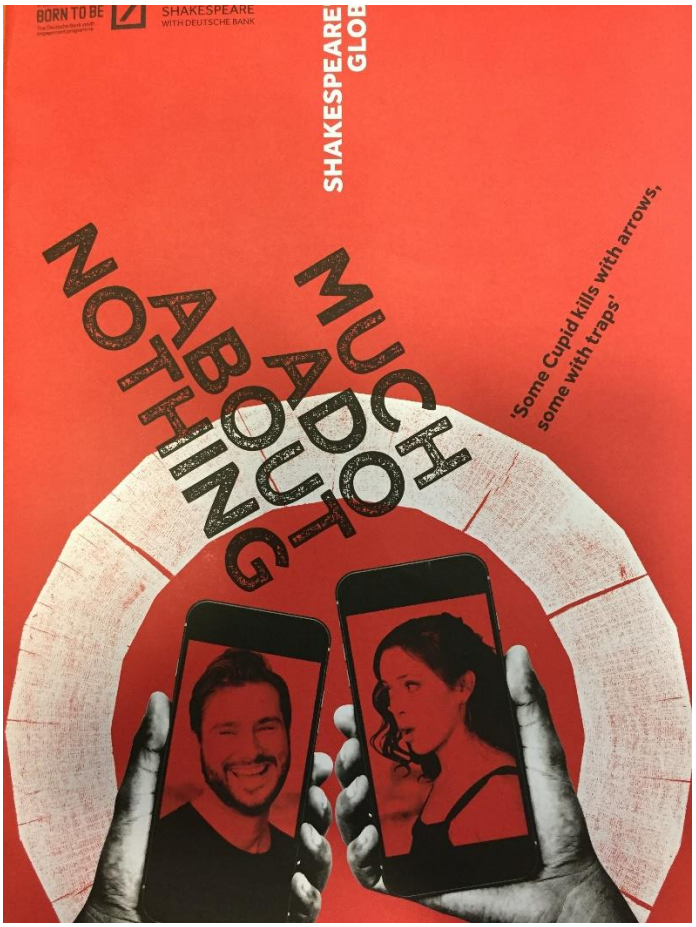


Figure 1: Programme cover for *Much Ado About Nothing* 2018.

As the students entered the theatre itself, the excitement and energy levels seemed to rise. The theatre seemed to offer a large novelty space (Orion and Hofstein, 1994) for most students as they looked around at the wooden structure and gazed upwards at the open roof. This

demonstrated how the theatre itself is part of the performance at Shakespeare's Globe (see section 2.3.2). The volume of the students' chatter also rose, and the shared light of the theatre enabled them to wave across the space at each other, to pull faces and to communicate through gestures. The students in the yard were also able to move around freely, turn around and stand close to or lean on the stage itself, giving them a level of freedom that is not available in a fully seated, darkened auditorium. The rear of the yard was mostly empty during the performances I observed, as students pressed forward towards the stage. I noted that Oakley had left the stage largely unadorned, although he had added benches around the pillars at the front of the stage, which would offer more variety of position for the actors during the performance, in addition to the stairs linking the different levels of the performance space that he had originally wanted.

The volunteer stewards encouraged students to sit down as quickly as possible in the section(s) allocated to their school, without worrying too much about the seat number on their ticket. While logistically I could see that this helped with getting all the schools into the theatre on time for the start of the performance, it interrupted the way that some students were taking time to engage with the theatre building itself. One teacher also told me that she had carefully separated certain students into different groups to manage their behaviour, under the control of different teachers, and the volunteer stewards had undone this work by hurrying them into their seats. This suggests a hidden tension between how the theatre operates and how teachers try to limit the opportunities for students to misbehave. Once they had sat down, I observed many students reading their programmes before the start of the play, often focusing on the cast list. Some continued to reference the programme as the play began, although I noted fewer instances of this the longer the students had been watching, suggesting that, as time passed, they developed an increased confidence in identifying the different characters in the play.

5.3.4.2 The Performance

Each performance I attended ran continuously without interval, as planned, although not all started on time and the overall running time was about 95 minutes. There did not seem to be any noticeable differences from Oakley's plans for the production (section 5.2.2). The details given in this section are drawn from all nine observations, divided into Acts to enable comparison with the synopsis in Appendix VI.iii.

Act 1

The production began with loud drumming from the rear of the yard, by Door 3 (see Appendix VII). This seemed to be an effective way of drawing the students' attention to the stage, although the cheers from the audience that resulted at several of the performances I attended drowned out the opening lines of the play. It took some time for the students to settle down again, and

my notes show a general low-level muttering continuing until Oakley's first 'big moment' with the entrance of Don Pedro and his men, returning from the war.

Don Pedro entered triumphantly on a moving platform to the sound of more drums, parading round the back of the yard, then moving forward through the audience to the stage. He waved and pointed at students in the middle and upper galleries, encouraging them to cheer as they clapped and swayed to the rhythm of the drums, and many students in the galleries were on their feet, waving their arms in the air (observation 5). In observation 8, students close to the stage were packed in very tightly and seemed reluctant to move, meaning that Don Pedro had to jump across onto the stage, rather than step from the platform. In most performances, however, the students moved out of the way readily, and it seemed that by the time he reached the stage, they were ready to listen to the play, as they quietened down almost immediately, and it was easier to hear the actors speak.

Figure 2: Don Pedro arrives.
Photo © Cesare DeGiglio (2018). Used with permission from The Shakespeare Globe Trust.

This early encouragement for the students to respond vocally to events on-stage seemed to give permission for the audience to interact with the production throughout the performance, with individual audience members speaking directly to the characters at times, as well as responding as part of a group. Sitting with The Massinger School in performance 6, I noted how initially the

students were quite calm and reserved, unlike the students from another school on my left. However, as the play progressed, they became more vociferous in their responses to the production, seemingly as a direct response to the behaviour of other students, as if they had been given permission to be more uninhibited by what they saw and heard going on around them. This observation supports the idea of emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994). However, the number and variety of individual responses from students in the audience also suggest that the production evoked much more complex and varied reactions that the idea of emotional contagion allows for.

The 'merry war' between Beatrice and Benedick drew strong reactions from every audience I observed. The boys from Henslowe Academy, who knew the play, clearly enjoyed the verbal sparring, anticipating and responding to each exchange both vocally and physically. During observation 9, I heard some girls say 'Are you yet living?' (1.1.97) in unison with Benedick, and there were loud reactions on several occasions to Beatrice saying 'Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were' (1.1.111-112), suggesting that prior knowledge added to the enjoyment of this scene. However, students from Fletcher Comprehensive, most of whom knew nothing about the play beforehand, also reacted strongly, with occasional support from their teachers. The play also still had the power to shock students who knew it: I saw some girls from The Massinger School put their hands over their mouths when Benedick said, 'keep your way a God's name, I have done' (1.1.116-117), as if they could not believe he would dare to speak to Beatrice so rudely. This may have been the result of seeing the play performed live (see section 2.3).

As Don Pedro announced that Leonato had invited him and his men to stay 'at the least a month' (1.1.121), Hero took a group 'selfie', and I noted on several occasions that students laughed at this. It was the first occasion that a character used a phone in the production, and it may have been the unexpected introduction of modern technology that drew this amused reaction. At the same time, I noted a boy trying to follow the play in a copy of the text that he had brought with him, suggesting a more academic expectation of the theatre visit in contrast with many of the students around him. A short while later, I looked across at this student again and the book had disappeared, but his apparent view of this visit as a formal learning experience highlighted the tension inherent in PSwDB between Shakespeare as a subject for examinations and Shakespeare as entertainment, since at the same time, other students were responding to one of the key contemporary references in this production.

Benedick's conversation with Claudio about Hero as a potential wife drew some interesting gendered reactions. The girls from The Massinger School (observation 6) chorused 'aaaahhhh' when Claudio described Hero as 'the sweetest lady that ever I looked on' (1.1.151-152), and

laughed at Benedick when he criticised Claudio for his 'intent to turn husband' (1.1.156-157), while the boys from Henslowe Academy (observation 8) engaged much more positively with Benedick's viewpoint, and shouted, 'Fight! Fight! Fight!' when Benedick was defending himself against Don Pedro's assertion that he would 'see thee ere I die, look pale with love' (1.1.202). When Claudio later said that his 'war thoughts' had been replaced by 'soft and delicate desires' (1.1.249-251), I saw one girl put her hand on her heart (observation 4), suggesting that Oakley's production had indeed made the audience, or at least some of it, love Claudio at the beginning of the play, as Oakley had hoped. Regardless of their reaction, it was clear that at least some of the students were not only engaging with the play, but responding to specific lines in the script, showing that they were listening to as well as watching the performance on-stage, in spite of the distractions offered by the large novelty space of the theatre.

Figure 3: Donna Joan is a 'plain dealing villain' (1.3.25)
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Borachio entered waving a wine bottle and appearing to be drunk. There was a marked difference between his demeanour and that of Donna Joan, the female Don John in this production. She was very still and serious, and initially the audience focused on Borachio, laughing at his wild behaviour. However, Donna Joan's words resulted in one of the largest reactions from the audience in the whole production. Actor Charlyne Francis gave the words

added meaning as a woman, so that when Donna Joan said, 'tend on no man's business […] claw no man in his humour' (1.3.13-14), her emphasis on 'man' gave the speech a feminist slant, drawing whoops, cheers and applause in all the performances I observed. As she went on to state that she would 'rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in [Don Pedro's] grace' (1.3.21-22), one girl in the yard called out 'come on, girl!' in an apparent show of female solidarity (observation 8). Donna Joan then stated, 'If I had my mouth I would bite; if I had my liberty I would do my liking. In the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me' (1.3.27-29), and the audience erupted again with cheers, squeals and applause. I observed a row of girls from Dekker High School, who had been using their own mobile phones, eating snacks and apparently not paying attention to the production, suddenly on their feet cheering as loudly as they could, in what I described at the time as a strong sense of 'sisterhood' with a female victim of male oppression (observation 5). Audiences then quietened down quickly again, sometimes leaning forwards to hear and see what was happening on-stage, as with the girls in the top right-hand corner of Figure 3. Before the theatre visit, several students had stressed the important of visuals in helping them to understand Shakespeare (see section 4.2.4.4); these reactions demonstrated how hearing the language of the play was integral to their theatre experience, something that the students themselves may not have recognised.

Act 2

The party scene at the beginning of Act 2 drew another big reaction from the audience, initially in response to the costumes. I was not sure whether before this the students had registered that the costumes were particularly contemporary, but in observation 2, Hero and Beatrice's outfits drew wolf whistles, and in other performances the audience whooped as they came on stage. Beatrice's refusal to find a husband also drew attention and demonstrated the flexibility of performing at Shakespeare's Globe, where the audience can become part of the production (Carroll, 2008): in observation 9, actor Fiona Hampton found a teacher in the yard with a beard at whom she gestured as she said, 'he that hath a beard, is more than a youth' (2.1.29-30). When she gestured at him a second time as she said, 'he that is more than a youth, is not for me' (2.1.31), a small group of girls who clearly knew the teacher turned their backs to the stage to laugh and point at him, demonstrating how individual the experience of being in an audience at Shakespeare's Globe can be.

The arrival of Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Don John and Borachio dressed in superhero costumes, in accordance with Oakley's plans, was accompanied with dry ice and balloons being dropped from the heavens above the stage, and was clearly totally unexpected, which seemed to shock the students in the audience. Their reactions varied from giggling and laughter to shouting and cheering, with students during observation 8 banging on the wooden barriers

around the upper gallery. Some students waved their arms in the dry ice, others chased balloons in the yard, and during observation 3 it also started snowing at this point, which seemed to add to the party feeling that this entrance had created. The students' reaction continued as the dancing started, and loud chatter masked some of the speeches as the characters paired off, until only Beatrice and Benedick were left. Students moved in time to the music, swaying and clapping as Benedick and Beatrice competed, then cheering and screaming as Benedick was left on the floor and Beatrice walked away victorious.

Figure 4: The revellers enter
Photo © Cesare DeGiglio (2018). Used with permission from The Shakespeare Globe Trust.

In all nine observations, it seemed that at this point the audience was unified in loving Beatrice, and was fully supportive of her victory over Benedick, supporting the idea of emotional contagion, and it took several lines of speech before the students were able to hear the actors continue. However, shortly afterwards, as Don John and Borachio told Claudio that Don Pedro had wooed Hero for himself, a girl in the yard in observation 8 called out, 'Don't believe him!', demonstrating that while some episodes in the play evoked a group response, students were also able to react to the performance as individuals, interacting with the characters as if it were possible to affect the plot itself.

Individual reactions as well as group responses were evident throughout the performances I observed. As Beatrice said, 'lest I should prove the mother of fools' (2.1.248-249), one student called out, 'Why are you so angry?' (observation 8). When Leonato then told Claudio to 'take of me my daughter […] and all grace say, Amen to it' (2.1.264-265), the whole audience in observation 2 chorused 'Amen', while in observation 4 only two voices responded similarly; in observation 9 there was a ripple of responses across the theatre, rather than a unified voice, and in observation 3, the audience response of 'Amen' was followed by a chant of 'Kiss! Kiss! Kiss!' from some students. These responses are important for two reasons: they support the view discussed in section 2.3.2 that the audiences at Shakespeare's Globe are unpredictable, and they offer further evidence that the students attending the theatre were engaging directly and vocally with both the language and the presentation of the play. Claudio's subsequent assertion that 'as you are mine, I am yours' (2.1.268-269) drew 'aaahhhs' from the students, and the subsequent kiss between Claudio and Hero resulted in whoops, cheers and screams, with a girl from Dekker High School commenting, 'That escalated fast!' (observation 5), although a boy from Henslowe Academy hid in his coat, apparently from embarrassment at seeing a kiss on-stage (observation 8).

It seemed that, in observation 2, the audience missed Don Pedro's offer of marriage to Beatrice as they were still focusing on Claudio and Hero. However, in most performances, the students appeared to be following the play closely. The audience in observation 6 had started as the quietest of all those I observed, but I noted by this point that the students' reactions were growing more vocal, and they were the ones who seemed to follow this part of the play most clearly, responding strongly to Beatrice's rejection of Don Pedro, where in other performances I noted muttering (observations 3 and 9), and teachers explaining the plot to students (observation 4). Don Pedro's plot to unite Benedick and Beatrice, however, focused their attention again, and when Borachio then entered drunk, with his Spiderman costume half off, to explain his new plot to foil Claudio and Hero's wedding, the students were mostly concentrating on the stage, in spite of intrusions such as a helicopter overhead (observation 6). They did not, however, seem to react strongly to the suggestion of using a mobile phone to trick Claudio, and it seemed that the students now accepted phones as part of the world of the play, following their use in earlier scenes.

Act 2 ends with the first gulling scene (2.3). By observation 9 I noted that actor Ben Mansfield, playing Benedick, seemed more confident in speaking directly to the audience as he considered what attributes the perfect woman should have. He seemed to be offering the students the opportunity to consider whether they agreed with him or were themselves suitable, but I noted few reactions other than some giggling during observation 3. Although Benedick does not speak

again until the end of the scene, many students kept watching him, as he moved around the yard while the women sang 'Sigh no more' (2.3.56-71), suggesting that he remained the focus of attention throughout this scene. The song itself drew similar reactions to the music earlier in the play, ending with cheers and applause for the women, who accompanied themselves on ukuleles. As Benedick then moved around the stage to remain hidden from Leonato, Don Pedro and Claudio, ripples of laughter followed him, demonstrating another aspect of Shakespeare's Globe as a theatre: where an audience member is positioned changes the view of the production, and therefore results in different reactions at different times from other sections of the audience (Freshwater, 2009).

Figure 5: Benedick describes his perfect woman
Photo © Cesare DeGiglio (2018). Used with permission from The Shakespeare Globe Trust.

The final conversation in this scene between Benedick and Beatrice resulted in giggling from most audience members. Even here, however, there were variations in the reactions. In observation 9, Benedick giggled when Beatrice said 'knife's point' (2.3.224-225), and some audience members giggled at him giggling, rather than at her words; in observation 8, one boy shouted 'Loser' at Benedick while creating the letter L against his forehead with his right thumb and forefinger. Regardless of Oakley's intention to foreground Hero and Claudio as the main

protagonists, it seemed that at this point in the play, the students were far more emotionally invested in Benedick and Beatrice.

Act 3

By the beginning of Act 3, some students throughout the theatre appeared restless, and there seemed to be a loss of attention on several occasions. The temperature was very low, particularly for the early performances, as a result of unusually cold weather (Met Office, 2018) and many students did not have winter coats over their school uniforms, although I did note two girls sharing a blanket that one of them had brought during observation 3. Some were also beginning to find the benches uncomfortable, and I noticed them rubbing their backs and fidgeting. Some students left the auditorium, presumably to use the toilet, including Katie (Fletcher Comprehensive, observation 3), who I noticed did not return until after Hero's shaming (4.1) and therefore missed several important scenes at the centre of the play. However, the low-level muttering that occurred during much of the second gulling scene dropped to little more than a whisper, as Beatrice responded to what Hero and Margaret had said about her. The subsequent mime involving Borachio, Margaret and Don John, representing the preparation for the second trick on Claudio, seemed to get lost, possibly as there were no words and it followed so quickly behind Beatrice's hurt response and determination to requite Benedick's love, that I was not sure whether the students in the audience had noticed it.

Benedick then appeared on stage, in large, mirrored sunglasses and a pink jacket, with his beard removed, and it seemed that the students did not recognise him. Oakley had wanted Benedick's clothes to symbolise his transformation from soldier to lover, but the transformation was so dramatic that it appeared to cause confusion for most of the audiences I observed. After observation 2 I noted that he entered holding the sunglasses, rather than wearing them, to help the students identify him. However, it was only when Donna Joan appeared to say that 'the lady is disloyal' (3.2.85-86) and show Claudio and Don Pedro mobile phone footage purporting to be of Hero with Borachio that the students seemed to fully engage with the play once more. As Claudio retched after watching the film, they were clearly sympathetic, but the scene was over so quickly that I was not sure if they fully understood Claudio's determination to shame Hero publicly, 'in the congregation where I should wed' (3.2.104).

The Watch, reduced to Dogberry and Verges, created a strong contrast to the previous scene with its more slapstick style of humour. Borachio remained a favourite for most audiences, and when he entered waving a large wad of bank notes as his payment from Donna Joan for the trick on Claudio, the students once more seemed fully focused on the play. Borachio addressed his confession directly to the audience, who seemed to treat him as a lovable rascal rather than a villain. Dogberry's use of a loud-hailer and tape to capture Borachio, however, provided some

unintentionally funny moments as the tape sometimes broke and did not work to tie Borachio up, and on other occasions did not break as easily as expected. In observation 8, the tape did not work at all, and the actors were forced to improvise, ending with Dogberry planting her foot on Borachio's back to prevent him from running away. It was noticeable that on this occasion the audience laughed far less than when the tape had even partially worked, suggesting that this moment provided a much-needed change of character and style from the love stories at the centre of the play. This scene was not identified by Oakley as important for keeping the students' attention during the planning meeting I observed, but clearly fulfilled that function in most of the performances I attended.

Figure 6: Dogberry arrests Borachio
Photo © Cesare DeGiglio (2018). Used with permission from The Shakespeare Globe Trust.

As Hero, Beatrice and Margaret prepared for the wedding, some students reacted to Margaret's innuendo, and one girl in observation 5 picked up on the reference to Benedick in Margaret's insistence that Beatrice get hold of some '*carduus benedictus*' for her cold (3.4.62), but most seemed indifferent until Dogberry arrived to tell Leonato about Borachio's plot. Oakley had been adamant that the students needed to hear this short scene so that they would all be fully aware that there had been an opportunity to prevent Hero from being shamed at her wedding. However, the students reacted loudly with 'ooohs' to a large wedding cake that was pushed on-

stage through the tiring house doors, and much of the scene was lost to subsequent chatter from the audience. The visual effects had clearly overpowered the language, contrary to Oakley's plans.

Act 4

The wedding scene (4.1.) began with the bride's party processing across the yard from Door 2 as confetti was sprinkled from the middle gallery, and the groom's party processing from Door 3, so that Hero and Claudio met at the top of the stairs leading from the yard onto the stage. The students responded positively to the glamour of a beautiful wedding dress and men in formal military uniform. In particular in observation 5, the students responded with 'oohs' which then quickly turned to disbelief and anger as Claudio said 'no' to Pastor Francis's statement that he 'come hither […] to marry this lady' (4.1.4-6). The shock resulted in silence in the audience in observation 3, as the students listened intently to the Pastor's instruction to confess any impediment against the marriage.

Figure 7: Hero is shamed.
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Benedick's comment that 'this looks not like a nuptial' (4.1.66) drew giggles on a few occasions, but most students were focused entirely on Claudio, particularly as he dragged Hero across the stage towards her father, and then called her a 'rotten orange' (4.1.30), which resulted in further

loud reactions from the audience; this was one of the phrases used in the workshops I observed at Henslowe Academy and one that many students in all audiences seemed to understand easily. For the most part, however, there was rapt attention throughout this scene, as if the students could not quite believe what they were seeing and hearing. While certain moments, such as when Hero fainted, caused one student in observation 9 to ask, 'is she dead?', and many others in several performances to mutter, as a whole most audiences remained quiet. Even when Leonato cried, 'Hence from her, let her die' (4.1.153), only a solitary voice called out 'Oi!' in an almost silent theatre (observation 3). Some girls in observation 9 noticed Beatrice crying, but only when Benedick confessed to Beatrice that 'I love nothing in the world so well as you' (4.1.266) did most audiences react again, with 'ooohs' and smiles. Their near silence during the shaming of Hero suggests that they were focused intently on hearing the words spoken and understood the seriousness of this scene. It also implies an emotional involvement in the play by this point that indicates empathy with the characters, particularly Hero.

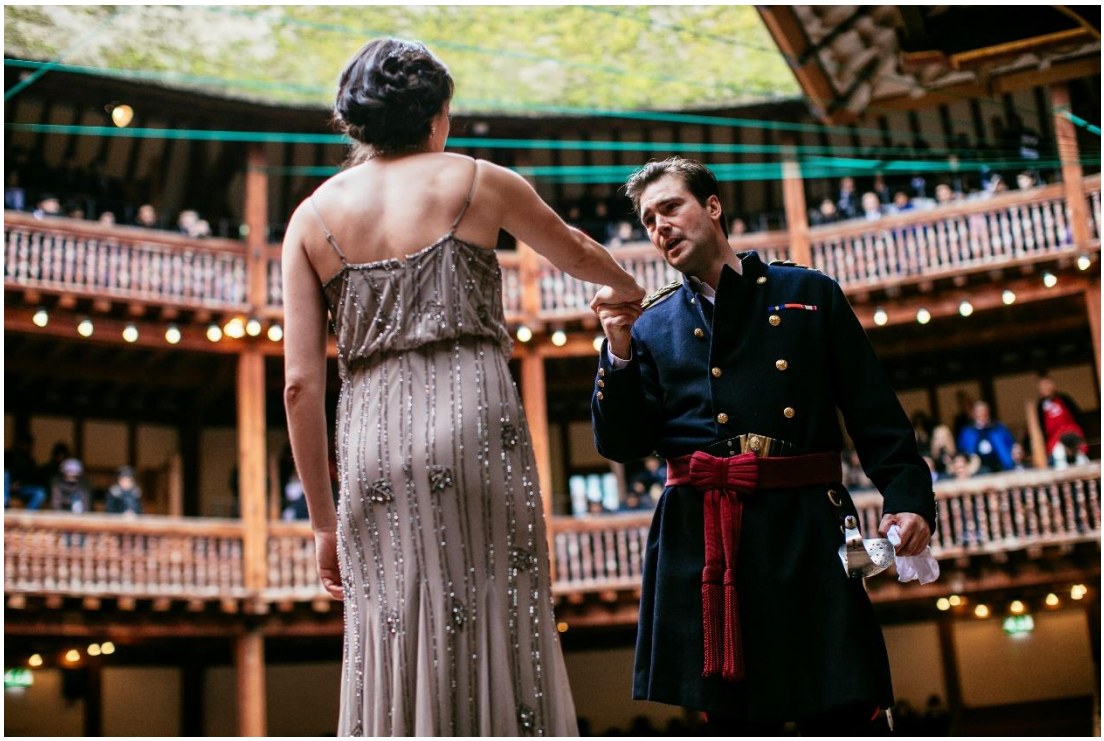

Figure 8: Benedick consoles Beatrice
Photo © Cesare DeGiglio (2018). Used with permission from The Shakespeare Globe Trust.

The subsequent declarations of love between Benedick and Beatrice seemed cathartic, and when Beatrice declared, 'I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest' (4.1.284-285), there was general applause from most audiences, with one student calling out, 'congratulations' (observation 9). Actor Fiona Hampton, playing Beatrice, then waited for

silence, before she asked Benedick to 'Kill Claudio', demonstrating the flexibility of live performance to respond to the audience in front of it. Again, the students seemed shocked, even more so when Benedick finally agreed to challenge his best friend: in observation 4 a stunned 'What!' rose from a student in the yard as the seriousness of the situation sank in. While the students were generally pleased that Beatrice and Benedick had finally confessed their love for each other, the atmosphere in the theatre suggested that they had understood the enormity of Benedick siding with the women rather than his male friends.

The return of Dogberry and Verges (4.2) provided some much-needed light relief, as they brought Borachio before the Constable to have his crimes heard. The comedy here again resulted in giggling, particularly in observation 6, with the audiences still loving Borachio in spite of his crimes. When he called Dogberry 'an ass' (4.2.66), the humour of this line seemed to draw back the attention of some students whose interest appeared to be waning, particularly in observation 8.

Act 5

Act 5 began with Leonato telling the audience, 'My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied' (5.1.42). His sincerity, in contrast with Claudio's disrespect in calling him 'old man' (5.1.50), seemed to turn the students against Claudio. Don Pedro and Claudio had entered in the middle of exercising, and I noted during observation 6 that some students started chanting loudly, counting the number of press-ups that the two men did as part of their routine. In this performance, the actors very quickly stopped exercising, to control the audience's behaviour, whereas in other performances I observed they had continued exercising for longer.

When Benedick challenged Claudio, the students seemed to have forgotten, or perhaps had not originally understood, that Hero was not really dead, as Benedick's seriousness cut across Don Pedro and Claudio's male banter. It was the arrival of Dogberry with Borachio in tow that broke the tension, and students giggled as Dogberry was 'too cunning to be understood' (5.1.213), particularly when she complained that 'the offender did call me ass'. The unveiling of Donna Joan's lie about Hero seemed to begin restoring Claudio's image in the audience's opinion, and Don Pedro's anger at having been deceived drew a strong reaction from the students in observation 9. Although the students still seemed to love Borachio, they apparently found it easy to see the now absent Donna Joan as the villain and creator of all the trouble, seeming to forget that it had originally been Borachio's idea and that Donna Joan had been cheered as a victim of male oppression earlier in the play.

Claudio and Don Pedro's remorse led to them mourning at Hero's tomb, for which the trap door in the stage was opened, as Oakley had planned. This opening of the stage drew murmurs from

the audience, and shifted attention back to the play for some students who were seeming to lose interest. Claudio's obvious grief at the graveside then attracted sympathy from many in the audience, for example in observation 6, when a girl put her hand on her heart in an apparently involuntary reaction to Claudio's pain. When Hero appeared above, in the musician's gallery, to observe Claudio's grief, she was in shadow, but many students noticed her. In observation 5, a voice called out to Claudio, 'she's up there!', while in observation 4 I saw a student pointing at her and talking to her teacher, apparently checking her understanding of the play.

Figure 9: Claudio mourns Hero
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The mood in the theatre after the scene at the tomb seemed hopeful, with a sense that most students now expected a happy ending to the play. Hero, Beatrice and Margaret entered in hooded robes and masked, so that Claudio would not recognise them, but this drew some muttering and laughter from the students, particularly in observation 9. The costumes, shown in Figure 10, were not well known to the students, as the superhero costumes had been earlier in the play, and therefore did not seem to evoke the reaction from them that Oakley had wanted when he was planning this scene.

When Hero revealed herself to Claudio, most audiences applauded, and many students said 'Aaahhh', as he knelt at her feet to beg her forgiveness. The students' reactions suggested that

Oakley had been successful in presenting Claudio as forgivable, in spite of shaming Hero so cruelly and publicly earlier in the play. The positive mood continued as Benedick and Beatrice agreed to marry, with smiles and laughter from the audience up to the point where the characters finally kissed, when the students reacted with whoops and cheers in every performance. The students in the upper gallery banged on the railings (observation 8), while others opened their mouths in apparent shock (observation 5).

Figure 10: The women enter, masked.
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The final 'big moment' of the play was a reprise of the electric slide, with all of the actors back on stage to receive applause from the audience. Students responded vocally and physically, clapping and trying to join in with some of the dance moves in every performance I observed. The actors continued to interact with the students during the dance, encouraging participation. In observation 3 there was particularly loud applause for the musicians, and in observations 5 and 6 students waved at the actors as they finally left the stage. The final performance, observation 9, ended with a vote of thanks from Patrick Spottiswoode, and as he walked onto the stage, two students behind me laughed and shouted, 'Shakespeare! Shakespeare!', demonstrating an uninhibited enjoyment of their theatre visit.

Throughout the performances I observed, I noticed some teachers focusing on their students' behaviour, limiting their movements and restricting the numbers who went out to use the toilets. During the wedding scene (4.1) in observation 5, I noticed a teacher moving a student to

sit by her. I noticed that this student was then sitting apart from her friends and spent the rest of the performance with her head down, looking miserable. The teacher's actions clearly constrained this student's social experience of the theatre visit. The social, cultural and educational effects of such constraints can only be guessed at.

Figure 11: The final jig
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5.3.4.3 Leaving the theatre

The students chatted loudly as they poured out of the theatre to travel back to school, and although the heavy rain at the end of observation 6 resulted in some teachers running to the station with their students, on other occasions they took more time. At the end of several performances, I also noted some students taking group photographs in the theatre, with the stage as a backdrop, and on two occasions I saw actor Tyler Fayose, who played Don Pedro, outside the theatre, allowing students to take photos with him. The number of programmes dropped along the South Bank suggests that not all students valued them as a souvenir of the theatre visit. However, the volume and intensity of chatter as the students left suggested that they had much to discuss on their journeys home.

5.4 Reflections on PSwDB 2018

The production seemed to follow Oakley's ideas set out in the planning meeting closely (section 5.2.2). Oakley had cast the play with five men and five women. My observations suggested that this decision only affected the play with Don John being played by a woman, as Donna Joan; it did not appear that having Friar Francis, Dogberry and Verges played by women made any difference to the sense of the play, whereas Donna Joan seemed to add meaning for PSwDB audiences as a woman oppressed by her brother.

The only major change that I noticed to the original script for this production, given to me by Oakley after the planning meeting, was a line added back to Donna Joan's speech in 1.2. Originally, the line 'In the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me' (1.3.28-29) had been cut. It appeared to be the final phrase of this line, 'seek not to alter me', that aroused the huge reactions I noted in the audience, and I assumed that this change was made during rehearsals as the line brings to a climax Don John's frustration and discontent with his brother. There were few other changes to Oakley's original plans that I could determine from my observations during the production run. Interviews with Learning Consultant Tom Davey, Oakley himself and a volunteer steward, Imogen, gave me further perspectives on whether the production had achieved its original aims to meet the perceived needs of the students in the audience.

5.4.1 Reflections on the CPD and workshops from Learning Consultant Tom Davey

I asked Tom Davey to reflect on the work done with teachers and students before their theatre visit to directly support the teaching of Shakespeare in schools. His reflections demonstrate an awareness of the tensions and difficulties inherent in creating education provision for such a large and diverse audience as that of PSwDB. He told me that the CPD is important, because its intention is to change teachers' practices. He called it 'a joining of hands between teachers and actors', and emphasised its collaborative nature, with actors introducing practical activities based on rehearsal room techniques, and teachers offering insights into how those activities might work with their own students in their own school contexts. He highlighted the circle exercise where teachers were asked to step forward or back depending on whether they believed Beatrice was being honest or disingenuous, described in section 5.3.1, as an exercise that encourages active listening, while avoiding the problems of reading. In his view, reading around the class prevents students from listening because they are too worried about their own next turn speaking, a problem also identified by students in this research (section 4.2.4.3). He believes that the circle exercise is also easily transferable to other plays and would not take long to set up in a classroom. However, it is not clear that activities such as this would remove all sources of student anxiety, such as being in an unfamiliar classroom set-up (see section 4.2.4.5).

The CPD only supports in-school learning if the teachers then use the activities and materials provided in their own classrooms; currently PSwDB does not assess whether this happens, and follow-up research would provide important additional information about which exercises were most valuable to the teachers for their classroom practice. In contrast, the in-school workshops offer direct intervention in the students' experiences of studying Shakespeare. In addition, some of the schools taking up the offer of free PSwDB workshops are schools that would not otherwise access the work of Globe Education, therefore the workshops provide a greater opportunity to support in-school learning than other programmes. The workshops make 'a significant contribution to the students' experience of the project, their understanding and enjoyment of the play and of Shakespearean drama more generally' (Bryer, Coles and Yandell, 2014). It is important for Davey that this contribution 'links with what teachers and schools need'. In his view, the outcome should always be a personal response to the play, its language, characters and themes, in accordance with the requirements for GCSE examinations discussed in section 1.2, and the activities should help the students to learn 'gobbets of text' which can be used to justify their personal opinions, empowering the students to take ownership of the plays for themselves.

Davey acknowledged that providing workshops in schools rather than at Shakespeare's Globe itself presents some practical difficulties. He is aware that the workshops can be tricky: 'you only have a short amount of time, you're not on your own turf at the Globe, […] sometimes [the students] don't know why you're there'. Often, a one-hour workshop becomes a 45-minute workshop, once students have arrived and the GEP has been introduced, something I had observed in the workshops in Henslowe Academy. However, he believes that the workshops can make important connections between the play and the students' own lives, and recounted his own experience of delivering workshops in a girls' school in Birmingham, where he saw notices about 'honour abuse', which related directly to his understanding of honour in *Much Ado About Nothing.* He told me that there had been many fruitful discussions in workshops about different perceptions of honour and how Claudio had publicly humiliated Hero without speaking to her about it directly. He said, 'I think that's the big prize with this audience and these plays is to make them feel that the plays are about them […] the dilemmas that are faced are things that resonate with them'.

Davey's own experiences and those that he recounted of other GEPs suggest that workshops can be successful ways of developing a deeper understanding of Shakespeare's themes and language for many of the students that attend them. Rather than relying on teachers to transmit learning from their CPD sessions, the workshops also connect directly with the students who

attend the play. However, Davey's comments demonstrate how important the teacher is for enabling students to access PSwDB's provision as effectively as possible.

5.4.2 Reflections on the production from Director Michael Oakley

Oakley was cautiously positive about how his production had been received by the student audiences. He had visited some schools after they had watched a performance, and he felt his design choices were vindicated by the comments he received. He recounted how, in one school, the students had recognised that while Batman (Don Pedro) and The Flash (Benedick) are characters from *DC Comics* (see https://www.dccomics.com/characters), Spiderman (Borachio) is a *Marvel* character (see https://www.marvel.com/characters), therefore belonging to competing publishing houses. This was a symbolic meaning that Oakley had not originally foreseen, and he did not mind that 'you can't hear any lines for about three, four minutes' when the superheroes appear, because the reaction proved to him that the production had made a connection with the audience.

A similar audience reaction occurred when the wedding cake was brought on-stage during 3.5, drowning out Dobgerry's words which Oakley had highlighted during the planning meeting as important for students to hear. Oakley again acknowledged that there was a trade-off between visual presentation and a focus on the language. He saw the cake itself as an important status symbol, adding to the sense of a high society wedding. He said, 'it is a shame some of the text is missed but then a part of me goes, 'as long as they know what's going on a response is always good''. My observations of the students during this scene suggested that they may well have missed its importance unless they knew the play well, countering Oakley's assumption that the students were keeping up with the plot. The shorter script may also have worked against understanding, with events moving too rapidly for audiences to follow.

Some audience behaviour had surprised Oakley. He was interested by the apparent lack of reaction to the use of mobile phones in the production, something I noted in my own observations. He was not sure if the selfie taken in 1.1 had made phones part of the world of the play and therefore normalised them, or whether students in the audience were just so habituated to phones in everyday life that they did not see them as abnormal in this context, making a phone believable as a means of deceiving Claudio.

Equally unexpected for Oakley but which he welcomed was the response to Charlyne Francis as Donna Joan. The combination of Shakespeare's words with the identity of the actor seemed to create a connection with the audience that demonstrates how important casting decisions are to the overall interpretation and reception of the play. Oakley was also pleased that he had cast the play with equal genders, and suggested that this supports equality and diversity in PSwDB,

which he believes is important for the students who attend, since they need to see people on stage with whom they can relate. The cast was ethnically diverse; although somewhat dependent on the actors who had auditioned, this diversity represented some of the diversity of the students in the audience. However, only Margaret and Borachio, both servants, spoke with regional accents; the other actors all spoke in the 'posh' accent that students had expected before their theatre visit (see section 4.4.1). Although *Much Ado About Nothing* is a play about high-class people, there is still room for further improvement in representing the diversity of the students who attend.

Oakley clearly felt responsible for creating the best possible experience of live Shakespeare to an audience of students. He said, 'in that space meaning is made from the energy of your audience […] I hated the dress rehearsal because there was no audience to make meaning with'. He told me that the cast had worked out three different ways to play Beatrice's request for Benedick to 'Kill Claudio' (4.1.287), according to how the actors sensed each audience would react, although I was not aware of any differences at this point in the performances I observed. He had also been making changes to the production throughout its run, moving an entrance from Door 3 to Door 2 only a few days before the last performance, to share yard entrances more fairly around the audience. His reflections suggest that meeting the perceived needs of the student audiences was a key consideration in all his decisions as director (see section 5.2.2). My observations supported his view that he had created an enjoyable and relatable production for the students who attended.

5.4.3 Reflections on the student audiences from Volunteer Steward Imogen

Imogen had been a volunteer steward for over eight years at the time of our interview in March 2018, so had observed and interacted with many different audiences at Shakespeare's Globe. She commented that every audience is diverse and unpredictable, including 'people who love going there and go to every production, tourists who are curious and just want to come in and see the building, school groups […] just everybody, all kinds of people', supporting the views of Globe audiences discussed in section 2.3.

As a result of this diversity, Imogen believes that PSwDB audiences are not very different from audiences at main season productions. She said that main house audiences cheer the production in the same way as student audiences do, just in a slightly more inhibited way. She suggested that this might be because PSwDB audiences are almost entirely made up of large groups of people who know each other, whereas in other audiences, groups are smaller, with less likelihood of interaction between audience members across the space. The attendance statistics in Table 9 support this view, with only 16 different groups of students in the theatre for several

of the performances I observed. Imogen also believes that location within the theatre makes a difference, with yard audience members demonstrating less inhibited behaviour than those in the galleries who have paid more for their tickets. She summarised it as 'an audience of pockets', supporting Freshwater (2009) who argues against a sense of audience homogeneity in theatres generally.

Imogen suggested that there can be behaviour problems in a main season audience, just as in a PSwDB audience. As a seasoned volunteer steward, she is comfortable with student audiences and does not find them quite so radically different as has been suggested (see section 2.3.2). However, she also suggested that student audiences have two main behaviour issues in Shakespeare's Globe which distinguish them from main season audiences. First, they are inexperienced theatre-goers and therefore do not know how to behave, which, combined with actors encouraging them to react vocally and physically, can lead to 'a bit of anarchy'; this contradicts her earlier statement, but, since this 'anarchy' is deliberately encouraged by the actors, she seems to be suggesting that it is acceptable. Second, she has noticed that teachers do not always exert control over their students' behaviour, particularly in the yard; this was not true of the teachers I observed, but none of the four schools in this research was positioned in the yard, and yard behaviour amongst students is therefore an area worth further investigation.

Imogen does not believe that the noise levels created by a student audience are problematic. She refers to this noise as 'voice soup', a 'babble of noise' that is constant during a production, but said that similar noise also occurs during main season performances where student groups are often present, and she believes that the actors are used to noise, for example from helicopters, as a result of the theatre's open roof. She does not see the constant movement of students in the yard as a problem either. She said that she has been told by actors that their focus is constantly shifting across the audience and between the galleries, so movement in one area is not distracting. Her comments focus on the effects of audience behaviour and noise on the actors, without considering how they might affect other audience members, another area worth further investigation.

Imogen said she can see how the production is designed to keep the students' attention focused on the play. The volunteer stewards observe the students as they leave the theatre at the end of each performance, and Imogen told me that stewards do ask them for their opinions about the production. She wonders whether students might just say what they think an adult wants to hear, but suggested that 'they've had music, there's always confetti cannons going off and goodness knows what else going on, so I think it's really difficult for any student to go out saying "oh, that was really dull"'. Her reflections suggest that for her, the behaviour of student audiences is a more extreme version of what is present in other audiences, rather than

noticeably different. However, this is not necessarily a view that is shared by others (for example Woods, 2012).

5.5 Conclusion

The interviews and observations explored in this chapter follow PSwDB through one iteration of the project, from announcing the choice of play to reflections after the final performance. They suggest that PSwDB has all the key elements of a highly effective TIE programme, integrated into the school curriculum, with the theatre production as its central critical event (Woods, 1993). This production used cultural references that made it contemporary for its audiences in 2018, such as the use of mobile phones to slander Hero, which seemed to be accepted by the students as part of the world of the play, and the change from Don John to Donna Joan, which appeared to add meaning to the play for many of the students I observed.

The CPD for teachers suggests activities and materials for use in lessons, which the teachers who attend can then incorporate into their schemes of work, adjusted for their students and for the play they are teaching, which may not be the same play that the students see performed. In-school workshops require effective communication between GEPs and schools, and effective organisation of students during the workshops themselves, for maximum benefit to be received. The CPD and workshops are also optional, and not all schools take up these opportunities to develop knowledge about Shakespeare's plays further. Similarly, the value of the microsite and the theatre programme depends on how they are used by teachers and students. Engagement with the project can therefore vary between classes within the same school, as well as between schools.

The theatre production provides the central learning opportunity for students participating in the project. Oakley's 'big moments' involved the students directly in the production as they participated with the actors in making meaning from Shakespeare's text. However, there are tensions between a production that can demonstrate how relevant and enjoyable a Shakespeare play can be and what is useful for students aiming towards high-stakes examinations. The reduction of the text to 90 minutes aims to keep the audience's attention and to fit into the school day, but also increases the pace of the plot, which may prevent students from following it as easily as when the full text is included. Additionally, the contemporary references might add meaning and be justified as original practices, but might also confuse students whose understanding of context appears to be a distinctly Elizabethan one (see section 4.4).

The theatre building also offers learning opportunities for the students, although the large novelty space offers multiple distractions from the production and therefore needs as much careful framing as the play itself (see section 4.5). I asked the students to reflect on the theatre

building in their post-theatre visit questionnaires (see section 6.2). If PSwDB is seen as an holistic project, however, with social and cultural aims as well as curricular ones, students can make their own multiple meanings from the visit according to what they notice and what interests them. The journeys to and from the theatre are also part of that social and cultural learning experience.

There is no doubt that most of the students and teachers I observed during the production found it an enjoyable and engaging experience, judging by their facial expressions and vocal and physical reactions. The costumes, music and dancing provided contemporary references to which they could relate, and the inclusion of mobile phones attracted very little attention. The visual humour provided by Borachio and, to a lesser extent, Dogberry, also engaged the student audiences. In addition, many of the students listened carefully to much of the play, responding to the words as much as to the visual elements in many places. One clear example of this was when Donna Joan said, 'seek not to alter me', and another was when Beatrice asked Benedick to 'Kill Claudio', but these were far from the only examples. As a result, it can be claimed that the production itself maintained the focus of the students and provided them with a clear learning opportunity to support their in-school lessons, meeting the core aim of PSwDB. The students' and teachers' reflections explored in Chapter 6 largely support this view.

6 Reflections on the theatre visit

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended:
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear;

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Epilogue.1-4)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to answer the fifth and sixth research sub-questions, which ask:

> In what ways do students reflect on, make meaning from and value the PSwDB production that they saw?
>
> and
>
> What benefits do teachers see in PSwDB for their students?

It explores the students' responses to the theatre visit through their comments on their post-show questionnaires and in their subsequent interviews, also drawing on interviews with their teachers, which offer a more long-term view of the value of the theatre visit. It looks in turn at reflections on Shakespeare's Globe as a building, on the production of *Much Ado About Nothing* that they saw, on the ancillary provision that supports the theatre visit, and on the students' and teachers' perspectives of the value of Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) as a learning experience. In total 599 students answered at least some questions on the post-show questionnaire, with 498 of those having also completed the first questionnaire, permitting some comparison between pre- and post-theatre visit responses.

6.2 Responses to the theatre building

The theatre building itself offers opportunities for learning that are an important part of the experience offered by PSwDB. The similarity of the building to the original Globe theatre used by Shakespeare, designed and built after years of painstaking research (Gurr with Orrell, 1989), enables students to see one of Shakespeare's plays in performance in material conditions that are different from any other London theatre.

Students commented on the theatre's design, and on how that design affected their experience of watching the performance. They referred to how the weather and wooden benches affected their comfort and how the shared light of the theatre and the structure of the building affected their experience as audience members. Some also reflected on how the building might be useful

for their future studies of Shakespeare in school, something on which their teachers also commented – this is discussed in section 6.6.

6.2.1 Reflections on the design of the building

The architecture of Shakespeare's Globe appears to have had a considerable effect upon many of the students who attended the production. Most had not been to this theatre before, and some had never been to a theatre at all (see section 4.4), so their reactions to the design of Shakespeare's Globe, as a re-creation of Shakespeare's theatre that was built nearby in 1599 (Shapiro, 2006), are an important part of this study.

The theatre was described as 'interesting' (B034), 'relly cool' (B142), 'amazing' (D151), 'creative' (C155) and 'very beautiful' (C221). Only three students used the word 'boring' in association with the theatre (A210, C128, C263), although student C263 had also written 'boring' on questionnaire 1, suggesting that her attitude towards Shakespeare is consistently negative regardless of how she encounters his plays.

The age of the building was commented on by 115 students. Student A112 wrote, 'the building looked quite historically accurate, which I enjoyed', and student B012 commented, 'you feel as if your in the Elizabethear time'. Student B155 also suggested that the building offered 'an authentic experience', although student C219 stated, 'it has lasted well considering it was there since Shakespeare's days', suggesting that not all students may have understood that the theatre is a recent construction. There were occasional concerns about fire risk (Ryan, Henslowe Academy) or building collapse (B027) as a result of the wooden construction, but the setting was seen by most of these students as a positive addition to their theatre visit, 'bring[ing] the olden times to life' (C032).

More detailed comments about the architecture referenced other cultural venues, such as 'an amphitheatre' (A026), 'a football stadium' (B151) and 'a colloseum' (B162), which suggests a need for these students to situate Shakespeare's Globe within a frame of reference that is already familiar, and which may have contributed to audience behaviour that was notably different to the behaviour of a theatre audience in a more conventional, darkened performance space (Woods, 2012). Other students noted the intricate designs and patterns both inside and outside the building: 'it was so creative the design was very deteald and it had a chines effect. It was also a religest desains in some of the walls' (C004). The keen attention to the detail of the designs inside the theatre shows how closely some students looked at their surroundings, somewhat allaying my concerns during my observations that they had not been given time to

wonder at the space in which they found themselves (section 5.3.4) and demonstrating the importance of asking these young people for their own views.

Some students responded to the building emotionally. Student C097 wrote:

> My first thought seeing the building just from outside was "WOW". The inside was incredible. It gave a "Shakespearen" auro. The statues and curtain etc made it all more real – I liked that it did not have a roof as it was something I had never experenced.

Nerissa (The Massinger School) commented:

> I thought it was spectacular. It was very grand. When I arrived at the Globe I felt very privliged to be there. It was very different to other theaters I've been to as it was circular, had an open roof and wooden block-like seats.

The language used and the length of these two comments suggest that the theatre's architecture had a positive and profound effect on these two students.

Several students also commented that the theatre was not what they had expected. For some it was bigger (B042), for others, smaller (C026). One thought that the lack of a roof had been a lie before she got there (C245), and another thought that there would be no roof at all and was pleased that her seat was sheltered (C247). Presumably based on knowledge of a more traditional, indoor theatre, Student C252 wrote that she 'was not imagining for the seats to be around the edge, because I thought the seats would be in rows in the midle'. These comments demonstrate how Shakespeare's Globe can challenge assumptions about theatre through its design, offering a new experience for many students and linking directly to the contextual knowledge required for GCSE assessment objective 3 (see section 1.2).

6.2.2 Personal comfort

Some students' comments about the theatre building focused on their own comfort as audience members. Their most common references were to the open roof and the wooden benches on which they sat in the galleries. All the schools in this study were seated, and therefore the perspectives of those standing directly under the open roof are unknown. The weather experienced during each performance I observed is given in Table 9 on page 136; this demonstrates how variable the experience of seeing a performance at Shakespeare's Globe can be, with snow flurries during observation 2, heavy rain by the end of observation 6, and sunshine during performance 8.

The weather was focused on by 98 students. Many complained about the cold, which was perhaps inevitable given the extreme conditions for some performances (Met Office, 2018). Student A161 stated that, 'due to weather, most people were dying of cold during the play!',

and student C163 commented, 'I think the globe was a unique theatre as it is the only open theatre. However this is also negative as it is built in London, which is cold and rainy'. Student C132 suggested only seeing a production 'in the summer and during warm weather. When it rains – or gets cold, you cannot enjoy the show', and student A176 commented that 'when its cold you get distracted', suggesting that the weather conditions detracted from the performance that they saw. Not all students who commented on the open roof were negative, however: student A033 thought that 'it was beautiful when it started snowing', and student B040 wrote, 'I love the natural sunlight as it brings you closer to the era', having seen the play on the warmest of the nine performances I attended.

The seating was referred to by 103 students, who mostly described it as 'uncomfortable' (A096) and lacking legroom (B007). Legroom was particularly an issue for Henslowe Academy, sitting in the upper gallery: Donny told me that he had put his foot up on the bench in front of him to try to change position, and had inadvertently kicked someone's back by mistake. Mo had similarly had his foot 'slapped' by the boy in front of him. Student B077 'had to stand up to give myself a rest from the seats a couple times', although Mo admitted that 'if you were at the bottom standing up I would have hated it even more'. Other problems highlighted by students included the hard seats (A104) and the lack of a back rest (D053). However, student A052 recognised that there was a tension between comfort and authenticity.

Those few students who did write positively about the seating tended to do so in comparison with those who they believed were having a worse experience than themselves: student C001 commented, 'I was so glad that we did'nt need to stand in the rain & there were seats for us'. The theatre 'felt cosy to sit in and we had good shelter' (C026). One student suggested that the apparent hierarchy of the seating made her feel uncomfortable, 'with us feeling "superior" to the supposed "groundlings"' (C168), and another wrote, 'some people had to stand which made me feel upset' (C032). These comments suggest a more subtle awareness of the organisation of the space in the theatre and of how that space directly contributes to the theatre experience. This relationship between space and performance is also important for developing an understanding of the contexts of production of Shakespeare's plays required by GCSE assessment objectives (see section 1.2).

6.2.3 Reflections on the building as a theatre

The architecture of Shakespeare's Globe also affected some students' experiences as members of the audience: 126 students commented on how where they were sitting affected what they could see of the production, and 41 students wrote about hearing the actors. These comments

varied according to where in the theatre the students sat for the play, and demonstrate how differently each person can experience the same production.

Sightlines were a problem for some students in all four schools participating in this research. Several commented on how pillars blocked their view (A097, C017), although it was not always clear whether these were the pillars on the stage or the pillars rising from the lower gallery to support the middle and upper galleries. Position in the theatre was clearly important, with students who were at the sides of the stage appearing to be most negative: student C117 commented, 'the seats on the side of the stage are the worst because you cant see anything', and student C184 wrote, 'I couldn't see much only when the actors came to one part of the stage'. Ezra (Dekker High School) told me:

> To be there was a good experience cause it's the Globe, but at the same time because in some positions where you've been seated the sun was in your eyes or you'd be blocked by pillars on the stage it was harder to enjoy, cause you were always like straining yourself to see what is happening and listening to it.

In contrast, Aron (Henslowe Academy) said, 'I liked how on the stage […] everyone could see different parts of it, and not everyone could see the same bits'. The students from Henslowe Academy, in the upper gallery, were more frequently positive about sightlines in the theatre, again demonstrating how position in the theatre directly affects individual experiences of Shakespeare's Globe. Donny (Henslowe Academy) wrote, 'you always had a clear view of the actors', and student B124 commented, 'you get a good view from whereever you are'. Few students in the other schools expressed similar sentiments.

Knowing where to look was a problem for some, as a result of the shared light in the theatre. Alice (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me:

> In like a normal theatre, it's dark, everyone is facing the same direction and there's like definitely lights and spotlights on the person, so everything – all your attention – is to that person, whereas there were so many different things going on in the act in the play in the theatre that it was like, "Who do I look at? I don't know."

Sam agreed with her. These girls clearly had higher levels of theatre literacy than many students involved in this research, but a theatre literacy that was based on seeing plays in darkened auditoria, where the audience's focus is guided by production lighting; seeing a play at Shakespeare's Globe therefore required more work for them in knowing where to look and in following the plot, resulting in confusion.

Less frequently mentioned than the ability to see the play was the ability to hear the actors, which some blamed on the open nature of the theatre (B152). Other students suggested that

the actors should wear microphones (D096), particularly so that they could be heard above the audience cheering (D098); Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) said that the noise created by the other students in the audience made hearing the actors very difficult from his position in the upper gallery, which contributed to his lack of enjoyment of the theatre visit. Problems with hearing the play seem to have been affected by where the students were sitting, since some students felt that the acoustics were 'good' (B071), and student B010 commented, 'One is close enough to be able to hear the actors very clearly'; student C090 related this ability to hear directly to the design of the theatre.

Some students also demonstrated an awareness of how the design of the building created a particular atmosphere for the audience in this theatre. Selena (The Massinger School) told me that 'it had a Shakespeare kind of feel to it', and James (Henslowe Academy) said, 'you get a better understanding of what it's supposed to be like' seeing a Shakespeare play live. Hermione (The Massinger School) commented, 'I feel like you could really connect with the people who have sat there before […] when you are sitting there like watching it in the same way that people before you have also watched it'. Alice (Fletcher Comprehensive) went further, saying that 'you got to understand […] why Shakespeare might have written some specific details for different reasons for the audience', which suggested that she could see how Shakespeare's plays suited that building, although she still preferred an indoor theatre, where 'the lights and things like the actual scenery and props can create more of an atmosphere'.

The relationship between the actors and the audience was key to creating an enjoyable atmosphere in the theatre for some: student A094 asked for 'even more interactions with the audience because it makes it more fun for everyone', and Rosa (The Massinger School) said that she found it 'really fun cause they engaged the audience as well'. James (Henslowe Academy) told me that the shared light of the theatre was important, in contrast with Alice's preference for darkness discussed above:

> I think it's helpful for the actors so they can tell how the audience are reacting to what they're saying and acting out […] also being able to see each other is quite interesting – being able to see other people's reactions, cause in the regular theatre well one: the actors can't see you so they just have to do it the same every time, and two: you can't see your friends' reactions and stuff so you have to wait to after – they might not remember what they were thinking.

Samantha (The Massinger School) suggested that this is 'kind of like a mirror cause you're literally just looking at yourself'.

The students' reactions to the theatre building demonstrate how varied the experience of being in the audience in Shakespeare's Globe can be. For many of them, the building was an integral part of their theatre visit, which they recognised and enjoyed, even if it was cold and uncomfortable for some. This active engagement with the space is an important element of PSwDB, supporting the choice of Shakespeare's Globe as the venue for this project.

6.3 Responses to the production

When assessing the performance that they saw, 481 students, 81% of the 595 students who answered this question, wrote that they had enjoyed it overall, often in contrast to their prior expectations. Only 75 students, 13%, said that they did not enjoy it. The remaining students were either more ambivalent in expressing their opinions or commented on a mixture of positive and negative aspects of the production. Some students also said that their understanding and enjoyment of the production was affected by their level of prior knowledge of the story.

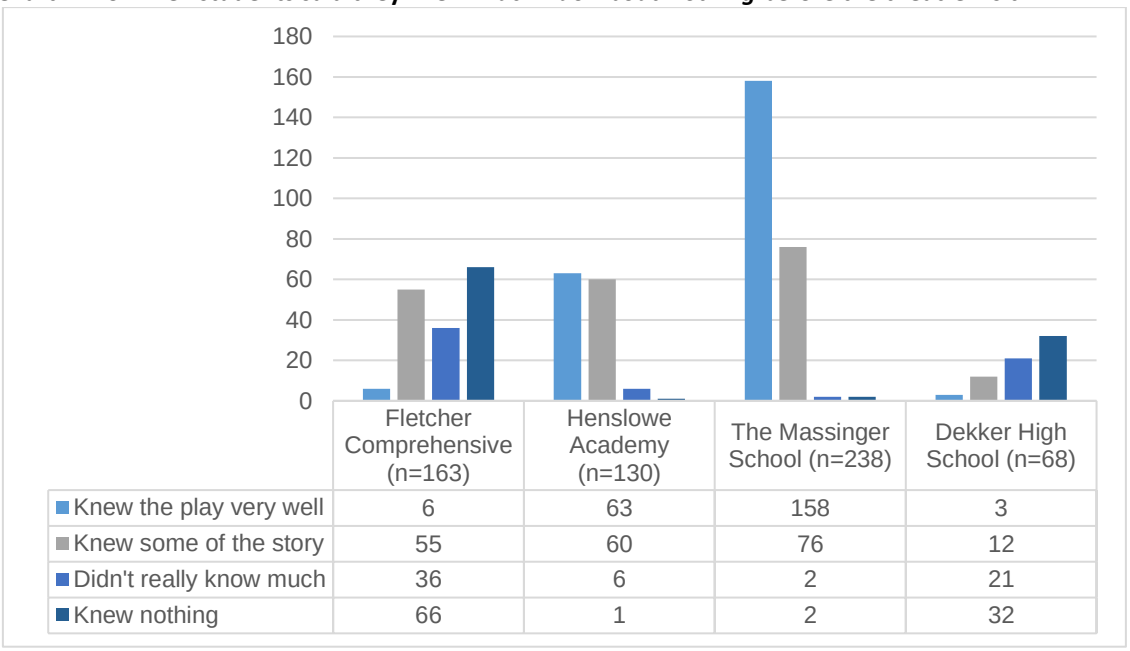
Many students made connections between the production and their own lives, in contrast with their views before the theatre visit. Often, this related to the inclusion of contemporary aspects such as the use of mobile phones, the costumes and the dancing, which seemed to surprise most of them, supporting my observations detailed in section 5.3.4. However, others found the plot resolution, where Hero agrees to marry Claudio despite his treatment of her, unbelievable for what they now saw as a contemporary play. Some also suggested that this play was no longer Shakespeare as a result of the contemporary elements. Despite this, many could see how the production could also enhance their in-school studies of Shakespeare.

6.3.1 Prior knowledge of Much Ado About Nothing

The comparison of the students' prior knowledge of the play with their reflections on whether that prior knowledge was necessary for understanding the production is an important finding of this research. The students' prior knowledge of *Much Ado About Nothing* is shown in Chart 7. Overall, students at Henslowe Academy and The Massinger School, who had studied the play, knew it better than students at Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School, who had not, as might be expected. The variable responses from students at Fletcher Comprehensive may have resulted from the varied preparation for the visit from teachers (see section 4.5). The students may also have understood differently how much knowledge of the play is represented by each category used in the questionnaire, which may also have affected these figures. Chart 8 shows how important students believe it is to know a Shakespeare play before seeing it performed at the theatre. Chart 9 compares these students' prior knowledge of the play with how important they perceive that prior knowledge to be: twice as many students who knew the play well beforehand said that their prior knowledge mattered for their experience of the

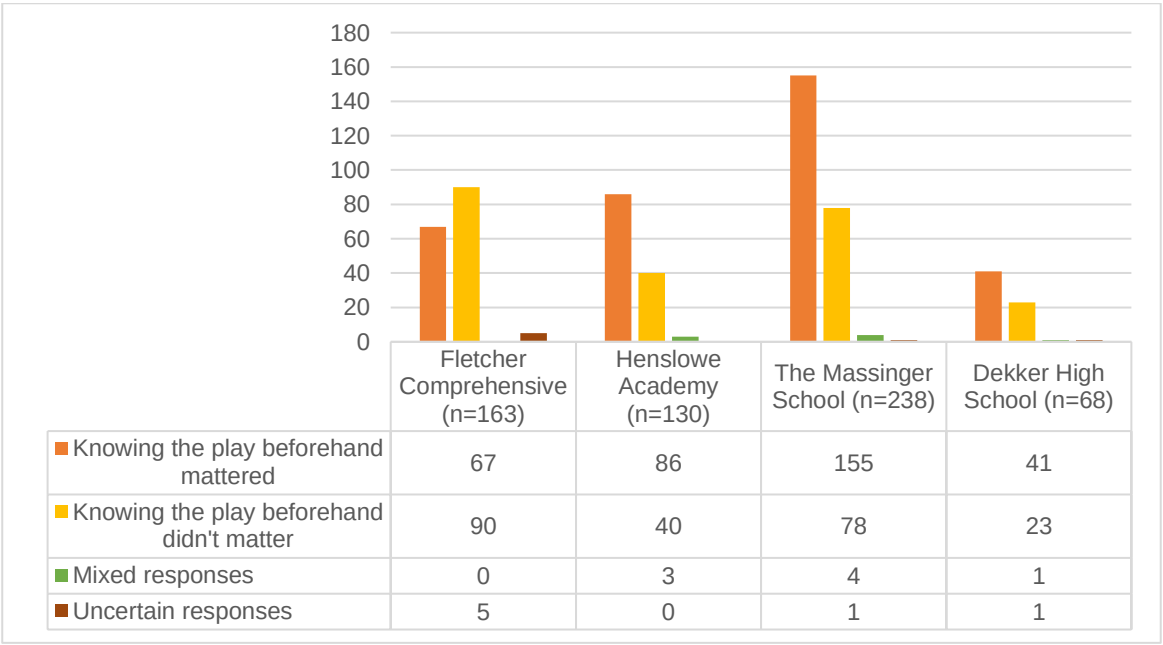
production as those who said it did not matter. In contrast, more of those who did not know the play at all said that prior knowledge did not matter than said that it did. Since the students answered these questions after their theatre visit, these findings suggest that students' responses partly reflected their ability to understand the production they had just seen, supporting the view that students are able to access Shakespeare in performance without any preparation.

Chart 7: How well students said they knew *Much Ado About Nothing* before the theatre visit



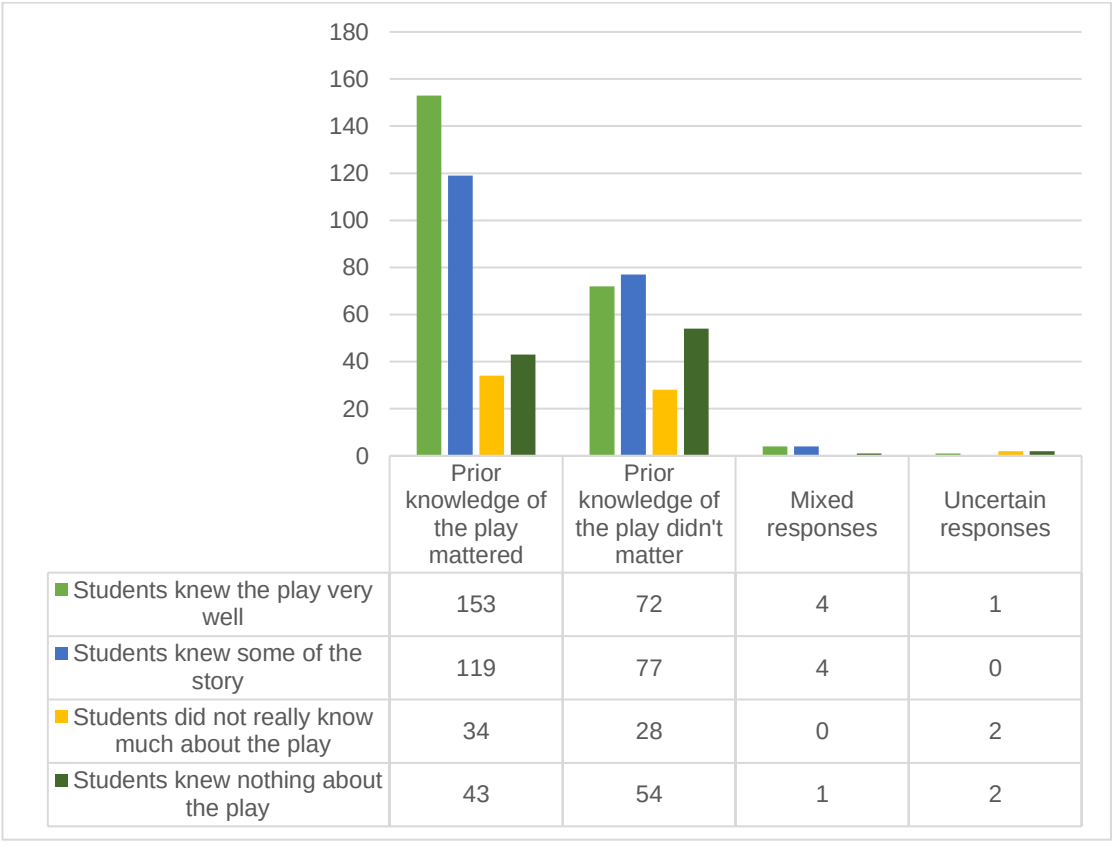
	Fletcher Comprehensive (n=163)	Henslowe Academy (n=130)	The Massinger School (n=238)	Dekker High School (n=68)
Knew the play very well	6	63	158	3
Knew some of the story	55	60	76	12
Didn't really know much	36	6	2	21
Knew nothing	66	1	2	32

Chart 8: The importance of knowing the play before seeing it performed



	Fletcher Comprehensive (n=163)	Henslowe Academy (n=130)	The Massinger School (n=238)	Dekker High School (n=68)
Knowing the play beforehand mattered	67	86	155	41
Knowing the play beforehand didn't matter	90	40	78	23
Mixed responses	0	3	4	1
Uncertain responses	5	0	1	1

Chart 9: Levels of prior knowledge of the play compared with how much students felt that that prior knowledge mattered.



	Prior knowledge of the play mattered	Prior knowledge of the play didn't matter	Mixed responses	Uncertain responses
Students knew the play very well	153	72	4	1
Students knew some of the story	119	77	4	0
Students did not really know much about the play	34	28	0	2
Students knew nothing about the play	43	54	1	2

6.3.1.1 Prior knowledge of the play is helpful

Some students seemed to lack the confidence to approach a Shakespeare play in performance without support from a teacher: 46% of students who answered question 3 on questionnaire 2, 276 out of 595 responses, commented that prior knowledge of the play helped or would have helped them to understand the play. Student A085 wrote, 'if my teacher never showed me a summery of the play I would'nt of understood a single thing that was going on'. Student A016, who had ticked that he knew some of the story, commented that he still 'got confused' during the production, and student A042, who had ticked that he did not know much about the play, wrote, 'I was just thrown into a Shakespearen play that I didn't understand'. Some of these students commented directly on the language, which is 'hard to understand' (B090) and makes the play 'hard to follow' (B130). Others commented on the plot: student A079 wrote, 'because I didn't really know the story before hand I couldn't really enjoy it' and student A095 commented, 'the plot is easier to follow if you are familiar with it'.

Eleven (The Massinger School) suggested that 'if you don't understand, you lose interest in the play', connecting prior knowledge with engagement with and enjoyment of the performance. Student D029 asked for 'a prologue' to help students like her who knew nothing about the play, and student D150 noted that there was no synopsis in the programme, which would have helped audience members like her who 'didn't really know much about it' to understand the plot. The limitations imposed by the design of PSwDB were also problematic for some students: 'the play went very fast' (B084) and 'parts of the play were cut out' (B114), meaning that 'a newcomer would be completely lost and would find it difficult to follow' (C015). In addition, the change from Don John to Donna Joan 'wouldn't have made sense' without prior knowledge (C020), although several students with prior knowledge of the play found this 'confusing' (C142). Those who knew the play less well did not seem to notice this gender change (see section 6.3.3.2).

For these students, careful preparation for seeing a Shakespeare play performed seems necessary to enable them to understand and engage with the production. The inclusion of an accessible play synopsis in the programme would be a relatively simple way of ensuring that all students could be supported in accessing the plot as it unfolds in front of them, particularly when preparation has not taken place in school.

6.3.1.2 Prior knowledge of the play reduces enjoyment

In contrast with those who felt prior knowledge was essential to understand a Shakespeare play, 48 students suggested that it was unhelpful. Student A194 wrote, 'I like to go in blind for no spoilers'. The play was 'predictable' (C063) and 'less exciting' (D019) for those who knew the plot, and student C075 commented, 'I already knew what was going to happen so it didn't matter if I watched it or not'. However, student C133, who stated that prior knowledge 'spoiled the plot for me', wrote, 'Even if I knew the plot, I still loved the acting and the funny moments that made me laugh', suggesting that the liveness of the performance has value even where knowledge of the play beforehand reduces enjoyment.

The students who found prior knowledge negatively affected their enjoyment were relatively few in number, representing only 8% of those who responded to this question. However, the idea that prior knowledge 'ruined the experience' (B169) for this small group demonstrates that preparations for this kind of school trip will never meet the needs of all students.

6.3.1.3 Prior knowledge of the play does not matter

There was clear variation between the schools participating in this research for the 231 students who said that prior knowledge of the play did not matter for their understanding of the production. In Henslowe Academy, where all students were studying the play at the time of their

theatre visit, 40 students, 31% of those who responded, did not believe that prior knowledge was necessary for understanding the play in performance. Of these 40 students, 16 said that they knew the play well and 21 said that they knew some of the story. In The Massinger School, where most students had previously studied the play, 78 students, 33% of those who responded, also did not believe that prior knowledge of the play was necessary. Of these 78 students, 50 said that they knew they play well and 27 said that they knew some of the story. 97% of students in these two schools who believed that prior knowledge of the play was unnecessary for understanding a performance therefore had considerable prior knowledge of the play. This knowledge is likely to have affected their ability to understand the play, whether they were aware of it or not.

In contrast, prior knowledge was much more limited in Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School, where the play had not previously been taught. However, students still found that prior knowledge was unimportant. In Fletcher Comprehensive, 90 students, 56% of the 162 students who answered this question, believed that prior knowledge of the play was unnecessary. Of these 90 students, 20 did not know the play well and 40 did not know it at all. In Dekker High School, 23 students, 35% of the 66 students who answered this question, also believed that prior knowledge of the play was unnecessary. Of these, 5 did not know the play well and 14 did not know it at all. The framing of the theatre visit in these schools had also apparently been minimal (see section 4.5), suggesting that these students were able to access and enjoy a Shakespeare play in performance with very little preparation, although possibly helped by the previous study of other Shakespeare plays. Student A138 wrote, 'You dont have to know the story in order to watch it', which showed an understanding that being a student of Shakespeare and being an audience member are different roles.

Other students stated that they did not need to know the story beforehand 'cos they showed us' (A111). Student D005 commented, 'I picked it up as we went along', even though she 'didn't always know what was going on'. Many of these students were complimentary about the production, with comments such as 'the basis of the story, the plot & all the characters were easily identifiable anyway' (B051), and 'the modern adaptation made it easier to understand even though they were speaking in Old English' (Nerissa, The Massinger School). The students frequently said that the production made the story 'clear' (D097), and student D154 wrote, 'once I saw the performance, I understood everything about the play'. Student A098 related the theatre visit to 'going cinema to watch a movie no one knew about', suggesting that in other areas of contemporary culture, lack of knowledge is not seen as a problem. This is perhaps an attitude that teachers could promote with all their students, particularly where prior knowledge of the play is limited or non-existent.

Seven students also referred to the 'handout booklet' (A013), which they used to help identify characters and through that to understand the play; this language is suggestive of lesson handouts, situating the theatre visit as part of schooling. Student D141 added that 'my teachers were telling me about some of it. during the play. so I got it a bit'. These students demonstrated a proactive desire to understand the play in the moment of watching it, using their theatre programmes and teachers as resources to support their understanding.

6.3.2 Entertainment value

Most of the students I had observed at the theatre appeared to enjoy the production, and this enjoyment was reflected in their responses to question 4 on the post-theatre visit questionnaire, which asked whether they had enjoyed the play overall. They described it as 'entertaining' (A119), 'enjoyable' (B105) and 'very engaging and very funny' (C175). The excitement and novelty of the theatre visit was particularly memorable for some: 'I really enjoyed the performance as it was comedic, lively and fun to watch. I've never been to the Globe before so this blew my mind. I absolutely adored it' (Nerissa, The Massinger School); 'I loved the performance! I'm not really into comedy but after I had watched the play, I couldn't get over it' (A181). For student A109, 'it set a nice light on a bad day', suggesting that for her the play was a positive experience, even though she otherwise appeared to be in a negative frame of mind.

For many students, this entertainment value was contrary to their previous low expectations. Several students 'thought it would be boring' (A175, C057), and for some of them this attitude clearly related to their ideas about Shakespeare, with student D134 writing, 'It never seemed like a Shakespeare play, that's why it was more enjoyable'. Student D128 expressed a similar view, adding, 'I thought it was mostly for older people'. The students also compared their theatre experience to studying the play in school. Student C235 wrote that 'the play was way better than the Shakespeare's one', and student C048 wrote, 'in the books it really ain't that facinating like it is in the production'. These observations offer a further insight into the students' reactions to text-based study of the plays in school, and demonstrate how live performance can affect attitudes towards Shakespeare for some students. More experienced theatre-goers amongst the students were less surprised by the production. Some had seen other productions at Shakespeare's Globe (B088, B124) and their comments suggested that they were prepared for anything. Student C104 wrote, 'you cant really expect anything from it as its always going to be evolving just as us the audience are'.

Only five students, fewer than 1% of the 599 students who answered at least some questions on questionnaire 2, explicitly stated that 'I expected it to be boring and it was boring' (A075). These students all expressed negative attitudes towards Shakespeare elsewhere on their

questionnaires, such as student A172, who had written, 'When I hear the word Shakespear, I get bored because in his play's he uses a a oldern english that I don't understand' in response to questionnaire 1, and student B107, who 'in all honestly' did not enjoy the production 'because I couldnt follow on aswell'. Student A172 had no prior knowledge of the play, suggesting that for him, lack of knowledge prevented him enjoying the theatre trip. In contrast, student B107 knew some of the story, perhaps implying that the differences between this production and the text he was studying in lessons made following the story more difficult. For both these students, however, understanding and enjoyment are clearly linked.

6.3.2.1 Music and dance

Music was newly composed for this production of *Much Ado About Nothing,* although the song lyrics came from Shakespeare's text. My observations suggested that the music and dancing in the production were important for the students' overall enjoyment of the play. Most of the students' reflections on the music supported my observations, with 401 students, 71% of those who answered this question, making wholly positive comments. The music was 'brilliant!' (B040), 'well done' (C099), 'highly proffesional' (C121) and made the play 'more enjoyable to watch' (C015). Several students commented on how the music was 'upbeat' (B085) and 'lively' (C161), and for a few it was 'the best part' (B091), suggesting that music should be seen as integral to performance. Some students also drew emojis (C047, C074), to emphasise their positive emotional response to the music and perhaps to portray views quickly that were more difficult to articulate in words.

Some students clearly had musical knowledge, commenting on the small number of instruments used (D128), the timing (C265), or the 'very good articulation and dynamics' (B153). Student C190 drew five stars on her questionnaire after her comment that 'The trumpet and the drum was really good', while student B074 recognised that 'they are professional musician's'. Two students wrote specifically about Richard Henry, one of the musicians, which suggests that they were interested enough in the music to read about him in their theatre programmes. These comments demonstrate a sophisticated understanding and appreciation of music from some of the students in the audience.

The liveness of the music was also important: 'I liked that they played there instruments so that we could see them' (A024), and the music was 'enjoyable, as you could actually see the musicians playing in the production' (B117). Ezra (Dekker High School) told me:

> Normally when you watch plays the music that they use is normally pre-recorded, but in all the party scenes and everything like that there were actually people that were actually playing the instruments there, so it was live, and then it added a new experience

> to it because you could actually see what was happening and what instruments were being used.

The music 'got everyone very involved' (C031), and 'it energised everyone' (C017). Selena (The Massinger School) commented:

> I feel like as soon as they started dancing – I don't know if it was just me – but like you kind of like get into it and start laughing and get everyone just enjoying it more and that kind of gets you into it ready for the rest.

The music 'made you feel included' (D076), and 'was a very up beat music that made me want to dance' (C008). Others mentioned clapping along (C014) and swaying to the beat (Rosa, The Massinger School), and the music was generally regarded as making 'the play more lively and exciting and […] the audience more happy' (C086). These comments suggest that the way music was included in the production added substantially to some students' theatre experience, and raised expectations of what is possible in the theatre.

The music also supported understanding for some students, drawing attention to important events as a fundamental part of this production. In particular, 'The music was a signal of the mood of each part' (C059), suggesting that it helped to set the atmosphere for some students. Student C212 wrote, 'The music really affected the performance in a positive way as it foreshadowed something happy, sad or bad', and student C168 commented, 'At moments where the play was slightly confusing or the actors were expecting reactions from the audience, the music helped make clear the emotion mean't to come across' (C168).

The music was not meaningful for all students. Four students commented that they could not hear well enough to comment on the music (A212, B107, C152, D040), and 27 students did not remember it (C123, D029) or 'take much note of it' (A043), together making 5% of the students who wrote about music. A further 7% of students were more critical: the music was 'boring' (A075) and 'irrelevent' (C075). For some it 'didn't really fit with the play' (D055) and 'wasn't the right fit, felt like carnival music' (London, Fletcher Comprehensive), contradicting the views of their peers. Some would have preferred other genres of music, such as 'grime' (A030), and student C213 wrote, 'It would have been nice for them to use some more modern music because the the [sic] yournger audience would be more intrigued'. The remaining 17% of students were more ambivalent about the music, mostly describing it as 'okay' (A062). However, most students' comments show that, as I had observed during performances, the music contributed to a strong, positive theatre experience and is an important element of PSwDB productions.

6.3.2.2 Costumes

My theatre observations also noted strong reactions to the costumes used in the play. Students were not asked directly about costumes but 97 students, 16% of the 599 students who returned questionnaire 2, commented on them anyway. This is a sizeable minority when their comments were un-prompted, suggesting that the costumes created a strong impression. The use of contemporary dress, particularly the use of the superhero costumes for the men attending the masked ball, was a focal point for responses to several different questions for these students, more important than responding to what the questions had actually asked.

For most of these students, the costumes were not what they had expected, and their comments confirmed the view of the majority before the theatre visit that costumes for a Shakespeare play should represent Shakespeare's own historical context (see section 4.4.1). Student A005 commented, 'I thought people were going to be dressed up in old Shakespearan cloths – not modern superheroes'. For some, this meant that 'the way the actors dressed was not what would of been in a Shakespeare play' (B042), and 'it didn't seem like a Shakespear play' (C151), suggesting that the costumes contributed to a more general theme concerning what Shakespeare is or should be. Student B169 commented, 'It was strange that they wore modern clothes, but spoke in old English???', and student D074 found this confusing: 'I didn't really understand what was happening because there was people like spiderman wonderwomen there etc. and I didn't know how that was irrelevant [sic] […] My English teacher had to tell me what happened after'. Other students were much more enthusiastic. Student A088, in response to my question about the gender changes in the production, wrote, 'i didn't really care b/c I cant get over the costumes, i love those', and Selena (The Massinger School) told me:

> something that lots of people were talking about were the costumes, like everyone kept complimenting I think it was Beatrice's costumes at the party […] it's just more like how we are now.

Although only about one sixth of students commented on the costumes in this production, their responses were unprompted and therefore provide a valuable insight into the effects of the visual aspects of a play on its audiences. The design of PSwDB clearly challenges some students' ideas of what a Shakespeare play should look like in performance, and these responses offer some validation for the attention Oakley paid to design when planning the production (see section 5.2.2).

6.3.3 Relevance to the students

Several questions on questionnaire 2 asked students to reflect on how they might relate the production that they saw to their own lives. Many were keen to offer their opinions about the plot of *Much Ado About Nothing*, and whether Hero should have forgiven Claudio and married him at the end of the play. Some wrote extended comments about the role of women in modern society, and some were able to relate the women in the play to themselves and the choices that they might have to make in future. The change of Don John to Donna Joan seemed controversial for those who knew the play; those who did not know the play before their theatre visit seemed unaware of this change until they were asked about it directly, suggesting that the change had not been picked up on by their teachers.

The contemporary elements of the production, such as the use of mobile phones for slandering Hero, were divisive amongst the students, some of whom felt they were inappropriate in this play: for student D083, the play 'was modern dayed up so it wasnt like proper Shakespeare', and student C020, who had previously given very demanding requirements for a production of a Shakespeare play, wrote, 'I don't think that was what Shakespeare had in mind. I think it would have disgusted him'. These comments echo those of the students who found the contemporary dress un-Shakespearean. However, the use of technology seemed to be helpful in relating Shakespeare to the students' own lives, in direct contrast with many of their comments on their pre-theatre visit questionnaires.

6.3.3.1 Forgiveness

Comments about forgiving Claudio ranged from 'everyone should be givin a second chance' (A006) to 'no because he broke her heart' (A012), demonstrating how some students sided with Claudio and others with Hero in the course of the play. Although Oakley had intended for the audience to forgive Claudio when planning the production (see section 5.2.2.3), 161 students, 31% of those who answered this question, said that Hero should not have forgiven Claudio, compared to 286 students, 54%, who said that she should have forgiven him. The remaining students were not sure or could see arguments both for and against forgiveness.

Some students thought that Claudio was 'gullible' (Leicester, Fletcher Comprehensive) but apportioned blame elsewhere: 'it wasn't his fault that he thought hero was a slut' (A047), while student A034 suggested that 'Anyone would make the same mistake'. Sam (Fletcher Comprehensive) offered an alternative view, writing, 'In contrast Claudio should not have forgiven Hero as quickly because she lied and pretended she was dead', whereas Claudio had merely been tricked by false evidence. The way that Claudio shamed Hero in front of her family was also important: 'if he really loved Hero he would spoken to her seperetly instead of

embarrising her' (A139), but ultimately 'it was a good ending' (A122). These comments all came from students in Fletcher Comprehensive, most of whom did not know the play well, clearly demonstrating that the main plot was understood by many of them; with limited prior knowledge, many were able to follow the story and comment on the end of the play in some detail.

Students from the other schools in this study made similar comments. Student B005 wrote that Hero should not have forgiven Claudio because 'he was too quick to assume and layed hands on her', suggesting that the physical violence towards Hero should not be so easily forgotten, and student C161 wrote 'NO. Because Hero was publically SHAMED'. Student B040 accepted the marriage because it was 'on HER command', implying that if Hero is prepared to forgive Claudio, the audience should go along with it, and student B051 echoed this idea, writing, 'She does whatever she wants, EQUAL RIGHTS'. Student B125 was more cautious: 'She was right to forgive him but I don't think she should have married him', and student B165 felt that Hero still had little choice in the matter, as 'she had little part in the choice. She was forced into the relationship'. The use of capital letters for emphasis in some of these comments implies a strength of emotion in the students' reactions to the resolution of the play and to the issues it raises for them.

Some students saw Hero's forgiveness of Claudio as re-enforcing a stereotypical view of women as weak and dependent. Student C210 commented:

> Whenever I read or see that scene, I get annoyed. Hero should've respected herself and left him. If he couldn't believe her word against everyone else's, is it worth risking such marriage? The answer is no. It never is. That scene made me strongly dislike Hero from the bottom of my soul.

Student C006 suggested that the representation of Hero 'shows women are weak and they don't mind marrying a man who has accused them', and several students complained about the lack of trust from Claudio which would seriously undermine their relationship (Eleven, The Massinger School). Some students in The Massinger School, a girls' school, had previously written at length about Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* as a feminist role model, which suggests that their teachers may focus on gender in Shakespeare's plays, and this may have influenced their responses to the treatment of Hero in this production.

For some students, the contemporary design of the production seems to have worked against Shakespeare's happy ending, and they were more explicit in relating the play to 21st century society. Student C043 wrote:

> As a 2018 girl I would say even though it wasn't entirely Claudio's fault, she should have at least played a bit hard to get since they tried to modernise it, yet as it wasn't his fault and she loved. And they were cute together, it was fine.

Similarly, student C097 wrote:

> I think she was right to forgive him as everyone makes mistakes and we all deserve a second chance. We as humans are quick to assume something without collecting evidence or asking for an explanation. As a 2018 women I was a bit disaponted in Hero, to be begging Claudio to marry her. It was a bit quick for me. I also was diapointed (as a 2018 women) that Beatrice gave into the setroytype and choose to marry but I understand that she found "true love".

Both these comments refer specifically and at length to these students' own identities in contemporary society, and suggest a tension between knowingly being a member of an audience watching a play with a happy ending, and seeing the play as a representation of that contemporary society, encouraged by the inclusion of contemporary dress and the use of mobile phones. However, ultimately, *Much Ado About Nothing* is a play, and 'in every fairytale, there needs to be a happy ending for the audience to like' (C242).

6.3.3.2 The presentation of gender: responses to Donna Joan

Many students' comments about forgiveness in the play were directly linked to the presentation of gender. The choice to play Don John as a female character was a controversial change to Shakespeare's play, adding a gendered reading to the conflict between Don Pedro and Don John and creating a strong response from members of the audience (see section 5.3.4). 219 students saw this gender change as a positive decision, 121 students suggested that it made no difference, and 100 students reacted negatively to the change.

Some of those who liked the gender change felt that it showed that 'anyone could play any role' (B072), suggesting that the gender of the actor and the gender of the role played did not have to be the same. However, most wrote more clearly about gender in society and how the change to Donna Joan added meaning to the play. Student C090 commented that the change was good because 'it does shut down stereotypes like a villain is usually a man', and student A153 suggested that 'women are as capable as being evil as men are'. Student B020 also suggested that it 'showed the resilliace women have' and student B165 wrote that 'it was good for a play set in a patriarchal society', reflecting other students' comments about the differences between Elizabethan times and their own.

Students at The Massinger School, the girls' school that had apparently focused on gender in other Shakespeare plays, were most supportive of the change to Donna Joan. Student C017

suggested that it 'show's that in our modern day society women are becoming what they want to be', and Nerissa (The Massinger School) commented:

> I think the idea of a woman playing a fairly superior character enlightened me. Me being a young woman myself loved the fact that a woman played a character who isn't submissive nor elegant. It didn't change the play much as the actress played Donna Joan very well.

Student C228 commented on the acting as well, writing, 'the Lady who played Donna Joan was remarkable, to even make people applause even though she was an antogonist […] I say bravo to her'.

The students who did not believe the gender change made a difference to the play suggested that 'it didn't really matter because Don John in the play doesn't marry anyone' (B011); this implies that the gender of characters is not important if the resolution of the plot remains the same for the audience. Hermione (The Massinger School) added, 'she was just as evil and got caught in the end. The story was still the same'. Other students 'didn't even realise' (D042) and had clearly not discussed the change with their teachers, although it was clear to anyone who had looked at the character pages on the microsite. It seems that the teachers in the four schools participating in this research did not use the microsite to prepared their students for their theatre visit (see section 6.5.4); had they done so, the advantages and disadvantages of this gender change could have been discussed in lessons as part of framing the trip.

Most of the students who did not like the gender change were those who knew the play before seeing the production. Mo (Henslowe Academy) told me, 'I was kind of confused who she was until like I didn't see a Don John, […] so then I kind of used process of elimination until I realised'. Knowledge of the play appeared to confuse the other interviewees at this school: Akinfenwa said, 'you find out in the end […] but because we know it, we want to pick it [up] like as soon as it happens'. Most of these responses were similar, with student C086 commenting, 'it was a bit confusing at first because I had no idea of who she was trying to play'.

Occasionally students expressed more nuanced views. Student B111 suggested, 'it should have been kept as a man or otherwise other people in Don Pedro's party eg Borachio should have been female. This is because it would have felt more natural for at least one female friend or a group of male friends'. His comment demonstrates an understanding of platonic same-sex relationships that may come from his attendance at a boys' school but that goes beyond other students' support for the gender equality represented by casting a woman in the role. Student C027 also stated that 'it was not credible that a sister will do this for a brother', showing a gendered opinion about family loyalties, since presumably it would be credible for a brother to

behave in this way. These comments suggest that there is far more to consider when changing a character's gender than changing the pronouns (C052).

6.3.3.3 The use of mobile phones

Another controversial element of the production was the use of mobile phones to slander Hero. 237 students, over half of those who responded to the question about the use of mobile phones in the play, were unequivocally positive. In particular, they commented on how this inclusion of modern technology made the play 'very relatable' (D067) and 'more teenage friendly' (C057). Sam (Fletcher Comprehensive) suggested that the phones 'made the play seem less "intimidating" as it was something we could relate with' and student A133 wrote, 'it made sense instead of trying to understand the english'. Student C106 also felt that it 'gave the play a good twist so that the people who already knew the play had something knew to watch and be suprised'. These comments suggest that the contemporary elements that are a regular part of PSwDB productions are engaging and are actively used by students to aid their understanding of the play. However, student B153 added, 'from where I was sitting I could see the mobile phone was off, so it killed the effect for me', suggesting a desire for greater realism. Student C032 also wished 'we could have seen the video for ourselves'.

Many of these students commented on the similarities between the use of phones in the play and in contemporary society, pre-empting a later question on questionnaire 2 about the relatability of the play's themes to their own lives. Student C129 suggested that the production 'showcased that the same amount of damage can be done with electronics in our day and age', and student C150 wrote, 'It was a great idea because at this time people, especially women are put in a lower level because of the social media e.g. if girls do something that they shouldn't do, someone could take a video and shame her'. However, other students were more ambivalent about the use of phones in the production. Hermione (The Massinger School) commented that 'it changed the story slightly because it made Hero seem more like a traitor, with proper evidence'. The students I interviewed at Henslowe Academy did not much like the inclusion of phones, but Donny did admit that if they had seen miming of a relationship between Borachio and a woman at a window, as in the film that they had seen in lessons (*Much Ado About Nothing*, 1993), 'we'd have all found it quite funny and then we wouldn't have been able to hear what they were saying afterwards'.

While 104 students were non-committal about the value of adding phones to the play, only 36 were wholly negative. Some criticised the use of mobile phones in the play as 'unrealistic' (A005) because they were 'not very Shakespearen' (A074). Student C104 suggested that 'overall I think they where trying a bit too hard', while others just called the use of phones 'silly' (B067) and

‘unneccesary’ (D006). Student A194 also called the phones ‘confusing as I didn’t understand why they spoke in Shakespean english and used phones’, again highlighting the tension for many students between the Shakespearean language and the contemporary elements of the production. However, the use of phones clearly gave many students a frame of reference within which they could both understand the plot and position themselves.

6.3.3.4 Lessons from the play

When reflecting on their theatre visit, 300 students, 60% of those who answered this question, could see direct links between the themes of the play and their own lives, often drawn out by the contemporary elements of the production. Many of these students had previously stated that they could not relate anything in Shakespeare’s plays to their own lives or the lives of people that they knew (see section 4.3.3). Themes to which students related included the idea of trust and how to discern what is true and what is false. Some fell back on clichés such as ‘Dont Judge a book by It’s cover’ (A065), while others suggested that the message of the play was to ‘show young people to stop being guillible in an age when there are many lies’ (B165). In particular, some students wrote about social media and the use of mobile phones to spread lies, since this was how the lie about Hero was communicated in the play: ‘Phones contain fake information, don’t believe everything that is on phones. People rely on phones too much’ (B152), and ‘be careful what you do on social media as it can have conseqences – for you and others’ (C206). These comments were in addition to the ones they wrote when asked directly about the use of mobile phones in this production.

Other students commented on relationships: some offered cautious statements such as ‘be careful who you fall on love with’ (A035) and ‘marrage is hard’ (Zygmunt, Fletcher Comprehensive), and others were more romantically inclined: ‘usually there is a happy ending where there is true love’ (C056). More were pragmatic, such as student C180, who wrote, ‘be loyal to your significant other’, and student D148, who commented, ‘dont fall in love in first sight’. Harsher was student A031, who proposed ‘for girls to not depend on someone and even your own family can turn their back on you’. While 185 students, 37%, were clear that there were no messages in the play relevant to their own lives, it seems apparent that most students could connect with the production through the use of technology, the presentation of themes such as gender, and the relationships of the characters in the play.

A further 2% of students found that ‘Shakespeares plays “aren’t as boring as you think”’ (B141) and ‘they could be fun and interesting if they are carried out and shown in a way that is fun and interesting’ (Samantha, The Massinger School). These comments hint at the positive effect that

PSwDB can have on attitudes towards Shakespeare that are discussed in more detail in section 6.6.

6.4 Liveness

Seeing a Shakespeare play performed live is central to PSwDB. The pre-theatre visit questionnaire responses suggested that watching a filmed version of the play being studied in lessons is a regular occurrence for most students, so I was interested to know which of the two experiences they preferred and why.

Liveness is an important element of the theatre experience (see section 2.3.1), and 243 students, 48% of those who answered the question, stated that they prefer seeing a live theatre production to watching a filmed version. This is because 'the acters interact with you, this makes the experiance more pleasant. The other people watching make the experiance fun when they cheer etc.' (C039). The interaction between actors and audience, and the sense of fellow-feeling with the surrounding audience members were recurrent comments among the students. The theatre experience was also seen as immersive and participatory in comparison with passively watching a film. Samantha (The Massinger School) called watching a film 'just reel not real', and student C083 commented, 'I prefer watching it live because then you really really feel like you're there, almost part of the story'. Rosa (The Massinger School) stated, 'it really amazes you how different live was back then when you see it in real life. When you see it on a screen it seems almost distant and vague'. Hermione (The Massinger School) suggested that the live performance was engaging even for those who did not enjoy Shakespeare's plays:

> Some people they don't really like Shakespeare and even when you watch the movie they're all talking or something, and when we're watching them do it live it's like their acting was so memorable and so good that we were able to all just watch it together without any fussing, and that was nice.

Some students also suggested that seeing the production live aided their understanding of the play (A027). Student B145 commented, 'you kind of get to meet the character', and student B162 suggested that 'seeing a play/theatre with your own eyes will make you remember the play better'. Student C168 wrote, 'with the film, its often difficult to understand what emotion is mean't to be felt and why but with the play and the theatrical atmosphere it is easier to understand'. Student C112 commented that seeing a live production also 'helps with the shakespeare language'. Live theatre therefore has an important role to play for these students' study of Shakespeare's plays. It seems to be particularly effective because it is unusual for many students: 'when you watch a film it's a normal thing whereas when seeing live at the theatre there's so much more to it. It's hard to explain but it so lively and joyful' (C074).

In comparison, 112 students, 22%, stated that they prefer films to theatre. Many of these comments seemed to relate this preference directly to the study of Shakespeare, rather than to forms of entertainment. For example, student D096 wrote, 'if you don't understand anything you can't press pause and rewind or turn up the volume', and Jennifer (Dekker High School) told me that 'if you're watching in class your teacher can pause it and explain what's happening'. Film is preferable since 'there are normally disturbances during a production' (B034), and Mo (Henslowe Academy) also complained in the post-theatre visit interview about the length of time taken to travel to the theatre, which would not have been wasted had he stayed in school and watched the DVD. Other students commented on comfort, such as student A083, who wrote, 'in a film your not cold', and student A172, who suggested that seats would be more comfortable when watching a film.

Some students focused on the advantages of film as a medium, rather than as an experience. Student B153 commented that the 'film has been filmed acted in different places, makes it more realistic'; this made the film 'easier to understand and follow' (B160). Perfection was also seen as an asset of films: 'a movie makes no mistakes as it is pre-recorded, has perfect acting, perfect setting, and catches the viewers eye' (B147), whereas 'mistakes are made in the theatre' (B027). However, not all students saw the realism of the film settings as a positive aspect of this medium: student C206, who expressed a preference for theatre, suggested that 'in the film you can see the setinng but in the theatre its our imagination – which makes it more creative'. Student A144 was also clearly aware of how directors shape the film experience: 'when watching the film you only see one veiw forcefully; however, seeing it live allows you to see it from lots of veiws freely'. These counter-arguments to the advantages of film over theatre suggest a more nuanced understanding of the differences between the two media.

A further 57 students, 11%, considered the differences between film and theatre productions either without expressing a preference or showing how both media have advantages and disadvantages. Student C026 suggested, 'in the play its more engaging with the audience whereas the film your able to understand the storyline better', showing how for her the choice between theatre production and film version was not clear cut, and would perhaps depend on the reason for seeing the play. Others noted the difference between the specific film and theatre productions that they had seen, rather than referring more generally to these two ways of viewing. The remaining students suggested that there is no notable difference between a film and a theatre production, since 'it has the same stuff in it' (A137) and 'the actors are saying the same thing' (D091). These comments suggest a focus on story rather than experience, perhaps related to seeing Shakespeare's plays as a topic for study.

The students' comments about seeing a theatre production, in comparison with watching a film, show how for many of them PSwDB offers an immersive and participatory experience, where, as part of the audience, they can enjoy and learn about Shakespeare in a new way. How far this relates to the experience of being in the audience at Shakespeare's Globe specifically, rather than at another theatre with a darkened auditorium, is unclear. Most students who preferred film seemed to refer to it as a study aid, rather than a form of entertainment. Overall, however, there is a clear preference for live theatre amongst these students.

6.5 Responses to the ancillary provision

I asked in each school about how the different elements of PSwDB, designed to add to the experience of visiting Shakespeare's Globe, had been used by teachers and students to support their understanding of the play. These elements, including continuing professional development (CPD) sessions for teachers, in-school workshops for students, a microsite for each production, and a theatre programme given to each student who attends the theatre, are detailed in section 5.3. Use of the ancillary provision was varied across the four schools involved in this research, reflecting the different ways in which each English department chose to engage with PSwDB.

6.5.1 Responses to the CPD sessions for teachers

Reflections on the CPD suggest that it is being used to support individual teachers who lack knowledge about Shakespeare in the curriculum, rather than for developing school policy towards the teaching of Shakespeare. My observation of one CPD session is detailed in section 5.3.1. One teacher from Fletcher Comprehensive and two teachers from Henslowe Academy attended CPD sessions. However, I did not interview these teachers and therefore did not hear first-hand what they thought of the CPD.

David (teacher, Fletcher Comprehensive) did not consider what the teacher who did attend might have gained from the CPD or that the techniques learned might complement his own current teaching methods. He told me that he rarely attends CPD, only looking for training that relates directly to a text he is teaching. He said that he had attended some lectures on *King Lear* the previous year, and was teaching that play as an A level text, but he was emphatic that he treats Shakespeare's plays 'as a text – really definitely – hundred per cent […] I think that I'm probably quite typical there […] that's what I'm good at, you know?'. He seemed very confident in continuing with his current teaching methods, implying that the training offered by Shakespeare's Globe was not relevant for him, particularly as he would not be teaching *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Persephone (teacher, Henslowe Academy) told me that the two teachers who attended the CPD from her school were both inexperienced teachers, one an NQT (newly qualified teacher) and

the other an EAL (English as an Additional Language) teacher with some years of experience in the classroom but not with teaching Shakespeare. Persephone said that the EAL teacher is 'really keen to build up her knowledge in literature, so […] she found it particularly useful', whereas the NQT had more of a background in drama and therefore found it less useful. These teachers had then spoken about the training at a subsequent department meeting, but Persephone's comments suggest that the CPD was seen as a way of increasing subject knowledge rather than offering different ways of teaching that knowledge.

Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) said that the CPD had been offered to teachers but no-one had been able to take up the opportunity; she wondered if it had clashed with an examination timetable but could not remember what the reason was. Similarly, Harry (teacher, Dekker High School) told me that time is an issue for his department. He said that each teacher has a very limited amount of time available each school year for CPD, and therefore they would be more likely to take up the opportunity if the play chosen for PSwDB were one that they were teaching in school.

These comments show that while all four schools participating in this research actively engage with PSwDB, the teachers I interviewed seem confident in their own teaching skills and therefore do not see the CPD as relevant for them. The CPD seems to be treated as relevant for those who wish to increase their knowledge of *this* play, rather than as a way of learning new methods for teaching Shakespeare more generally. Time allowed for CPD and timing in each school's calendar are clearly issues, and schools must prioritise where they focus their resources. It seems that Globe Education has a difficult task to attract teachers to participate in and value the CPD as an integral part of PSwDB.

6.5.2 Take-up and responses to the in-school workshops

Henslowe Academy was the only school to take up the offer of in-school student workshops. The main reason given by the other three schools for not accessing this element of PSwDB was financial. Each school can access three free in-school workshops for their students, paying a fee for any additional workshops to include the whole year group.

David (teacher, Fletcher Comprehensive) and Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) both told me that concern over the school budget was the primary reason for not booking workshops for their students, since they would want all students in the year group to participate. David said, 'I'm just trying to get books, to be honest, they're my first priority', and Anne told me that Year 8 have workshops provided by Globe Education, and then Year 9 visit Shakespeare's Globe for the PSwDB production, and this is 'about a kind of spread of provision for all year groups […] really we try to make sure that each year they are getting something that is academically

enriching'. She added, 'we sort of think holistically about the journey from Year 7 all the way through to Year 11'.

David added that he also had curriculum reasons for not booking workshops, since the students in his school were not studying this play. He said, 'although you know a workshop on *Much Ado*'d be lovely and enjoyable […] the first thing a Year 9 student's going to ask me is "why are we doing this?"', suggesting that, in his view, a workshop that did not link directly to lessons would disengage his students. A further reason for not booking workshops was given by Harry (teacher, Dekker High School), who had intended to book workshops for his students but had not managed to find time for them in the school calendar when taking students out of their other lessons would be acceptable.

Henslowe Academy booked seven workshops so that every student had the opportunity to take part (see section 5.3.3). This introduced a small cost for the students, £2.50 each according to the students I interviewed. The school had the lowest proportion of students eligible for Free School Meals of the four schools in this study, at 6.3%, less than half the national average (see Table 4 on page 66); the small cost of the workshops for these students was therefore unlikely to be prohibitive for most of them, with the school likely to have needed to fund very few workshop places for students who could not afford the cost.

The students at this school told me that they had chosen their GCSE options in Year 8, and therefore no longer had Drama lessons unless they had chosen that as an examination subject. None of the interview participants had chosen Drama, and they therefore seemed to see the workshops more negatively, relating to a subject that they no longer wished to study. Mo could remember the activities from the workshop quite clearly, but told me that he 'didn't like drama' and would 'probably rather be in maths than do that', even though he does not like maths. He added, 'it was just something that the teachers do to try and make school, you know, funner, but in reality it just makes it a bit boring […] a bit cringey', a viewpoint that may need to be addressed directly in workshop planning. In contrast, James told me that he had enjoyed his workshop, although he did not feel that he had learnt much from it: 'If we hadn't been studying it and that was an introduction by going to that workshop, then it would have helped a lot, but cause we'd already been studying it, it didn't really benefit us – me anyway'.

The students also discussed how Shakespeare's language had been introduced in the workshops. Akinfenwa told me that 'a couple of people had to say "rotten orange" and no one knew what it meant'. When I challenged him on this, Mo suggested that 'since all of the other language […] you have to think about it, this is – it's kind of too easy', and Donny agreed, saying, 'we assume there's a deeper meaning to everything'. Their comments again highlight the perceived difficulty

of Shakespeare's language amongst the students, so that even where the words are more straightforward, the students believe that they are not understanding the full meaning. This lack of understanding suggests that teachers and workshop leaders need to explicitly reinforce the idea that Shakespeare's language can be accessible.

Persephone (teacher, Henslowe Academy), seemed unaware of her students' criticisms of the workshops. She said:

> If at all possible you'd want your students to be active and to be acting out the play, I mean, that can really enhance your understanding of it – it's just a wonderful experience for them to remember for the rest of their lives, and what a wonderful thing for them to have a professional actor come to school and teach them about this play.

From prior experience of Globe Education workshops, she 'knew it was going to be good quality', but she was not teaching a Year 9 class at the time of this research, and had therefore not attended any of the workshops herself and seemed not to have received any direct feedback about them.

The teachers' comments suggest that they see the workshops as providing a valuable addition to the theatre visit for their students. However, budgetary and time constraints restrict access to this part of the provision for some schools, particularly where the school has an ethos of inclusion and therefore would want more than the number of workshops offered free of charge. The students' comments suggest that there is more to be done to ensure that the workshops are appropriate for their target audience, particularly for students who see the workshops as Drama lessons rather than English lessons.

6.5.3 Responses to the theatre programme

Teachers were given theatre programmes to hand to every student as they arrived at the theatre. However, some students said that they did not receive one, and some did not value them. Not all students understood the term 'theatre programme' either, for example London (Fletcher Comprehensive), who needed to see my copy to know what I meant, and Selena (The Massinger School), who called it a 'red booklet'. London said, 'I don't remember getting anything', and Zygmunt (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me, 'I just put it beside me and when I left I accidentally forgot it'. Only Akinfenwa amongst the students I interviewed at Henslowe Academy said that he had received a programme, which another student had thrown down into the yard from where they were sitting in the upper gallery, although Donny told me that he had shared with a neighbour and used the cast list in it to understand who Donna Joan was.

The students I interviewed at The Massinger School had all received programmes and had used them predominantly to look at the cast list. Selena told me, 'we were looking through the

characters and we suddenly realised that the evil character had turned into a like female, and we were like "oh, that's really like it's really cool" cause I feel like it's different'. She had also looked at the actors' biographies, which gave her confidence that they would be 'quite good actors […] they showed that when they were on stage'. Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) had noticed how the students were using their programmes. She told me, 'they were really confused by Donna Joan instead of Don John to start with – that completely threw them off – so I saw them all really looking in their programmes – "oh, right, okay, yeah" – they were all enjoying the programmes actually'. The students at Dekker High School had also used the programmes for identifying the characters in the play.

While the programmes had been useful for those students who had received them during their theatre visit, only Persephone (teacher, Henslowe Academy) planned to use the programme content during lessons afterwards. This is possibly because Henslowe Academy was the only one of these four schools studying *Much Ado About Nothing* at the time of the theatre visit. She said that she liked the academic essays in the programme, particularly the one on verse and prose, and her colleague Robin said that he had scanned it into the computer so that teachers could refer to it in their lessons. He seemed unaware that the essays were already on-line, on the production microsite.

The programme is clearly an important addition to the theatre experience, providing the students with additional information that is actively used by many to help with understanding the production. The students that appeared to make most use of the programme were those who already had some knowledge of the play, at The Massinger School, although some students at Dekker High School, with little prior knowledge, also found the cast list helpful. However, many students apparently did not receive a copy, and the logistics of how these are distributed may need to be addressed to ensure that every student gets one, since some teachers apparently do not hand them out.

6.5.4 Responses to the microsite

The microsite has the potential to reach far beyond the schools who attend Shakespeare's Globe for the PSwDB production each year, since it is freely available via the internet. However, it does not appear to have been accessed by the teachers and students at the schools involved in this research. None of the students I interviewed was aware of the microsite. I pointed out where the web address was included in the theatre programme, and Akinfenwa (Henslowe Academy) told me, 'I can guarantee you no one person in my year has read every single page or looked on that website unless someone's mum has made them or dad'. Since some students had also

claimed not to have received a programme, this suggests that unless the microsite is used in lessons, students are unlikely to be aware of it.

Persephone (teacher, Henslowe Academy) said that she had 'shared the website with the teachers who were teaching the play', but that, as she did not have a Year 9 class at the time, she had not referred to it herself. She told me that 'it's up to them whether or not they wanted to use it and how they wanted to go about using it'. She had, however, used the microsite for 2017 before seeing *The Taming of the Shrew,* a play that she judges to be more difficult for the students to understand*,* which suggests that she sees the microsite as useful for plot work.

Harry (teacher, Dekker High School) appeared to have most knowledge of the microsite, and told me, 'I always send a link to the website so I'm sure some teachers would've used [it]', although he did not know this for certain. He said, 'the websites are always very attractive […] there's lots of vlogging[25] things and texts […] verging on a bit cheesy but I still think it gets the girls talking about it and they like seeing that kind of stuff on the website'. His comment highlights the way that the microsite draws on popular culture and social media for some of its content, as a way of connecting with its target audience. However, none of his students in the post-show interview seemed to be aware of the microsite, suggesting that it had not featured in their lessons.

The microsite is demonstrated to teachers during CPD sessions, and is designed to aid learning about the play before visiting Shakespeare's Globe (see section 5.3.2). It has the potential to support detailed teaching of the play where it is being studied, and more simplified framing of the theatre visit where it is not. Changes such as the casting of a woman in Don John's role were clearly shown, and reference to the character pages beforehand may have reduced some of the confusion felt by the students (see section 6.3.3.2). However, the use of the microsite in these four schools seems rare, suggesting that these teachers do not seen it as an integral part of PSwDB, and further promotion by Globe Education would clearly benefit students' understanding of the play. The use of the microsite would be a valuable area for further research.

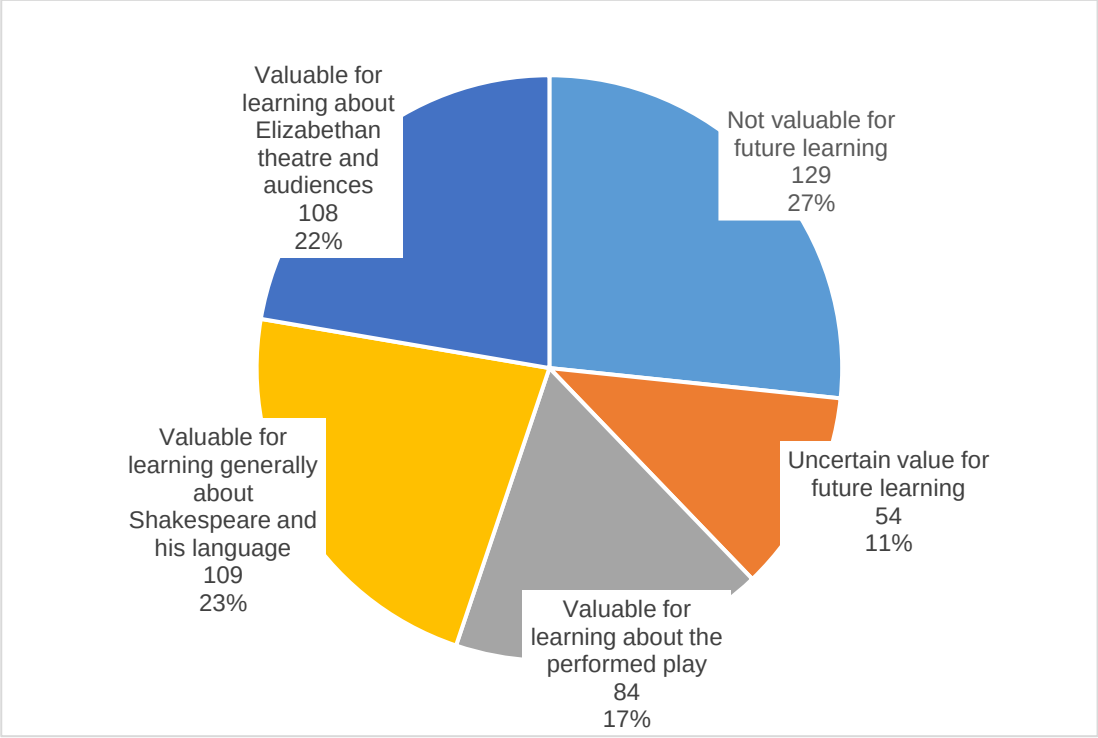
6.6 Opportunities for learning from PSwDB

PSwDB is designed as a learning experience, to support the in-school studies of Shakespeare within the requirements of the National Curriculum for English (see section 1.2). I asked students to reflect on whether or not their visit to Shakespeare's Globe would have any benefit for their

[25] Vlogging is the act of creating a vlog. A vlog is a video log, blending video and words to create a diary-like text with images that is published on the internet (McArthur, Lam-McArthur and Fontaine, 2018).

future Shakespeare studies, even though the immediate effects of an education programme may be imperceptible (Robinson, 1993). In addition, it is important to recognise that this question may have given rise to opinions that would otherwise have remained unformed (see section 3.7). The students gave broadly five different answers, shown in Chart 10. Overall, 62% of students could find some value related to future learning in their theatre trip, compared to 11% who were unsure and 27% who stated that there was no such value.

Chart 10: The value of the theatre visit for future Shakespeare studies



Total number of responses = 484. Chart 10 shows the number of responses in each category and the proportion of the total number of responses as a percentage.

Questionnaires were completed and interviews carried almost immediately after the theatre visit. Some students, such as those in Henslowe Academy who were taking mock examinations, had not had an English lesson in which to begin reflecting on the production; their responses were therefore mostly unaffected by classroom discussions that might have demonstrated how the trip could enhance their learning about Shakespeare. The trip was organised by school and took place during school hours, and this context may have influenced some students' comments. However, their explanations showed careful reasoning in many cases, suggesting that seeing the theatre visit as a school trip cannot have been the only cause for their responses.

The teachers I interviewed did not seem to expect their students to see value in their theatre visit, and took a more long-term perspective, commenting on how they expected to refer to the

theatre visit in subsequent lessons, both immediately after the theatre visit and as the students progressed up the school. A more longitudinal study would have the opportunity to explore this on-going learning as a result of seeing a PSwDB performance.

6.6.1 PSwDB is not seen as valuable for future learning

The students who said that they could see no value for future learning in their theatre visit gave a variety of reasons that demonstrate how individual a theatre experience can be. For Zygmunt (Fletcher Comprehensive), the lack of value was directly as a result of the contemporary references and costumes in the play. Several students mentioned the inclusion of mobile phones, which had not appeared to present a problem for them during the performances, but clearly were a problem when considering how they could learn from the production. Student A128 commented, 'Shakesperian plays are nothing like the one we watched', and student D048 wrote, 'we study old Shakespeare plays not modern versions of plays', reinforcing the idea, discussed in relation to costumes, that for them this production was not Shakespeare.

Students in both Henslowe Academy and The Massinger School, who had previously studied *Much Ado About Nothing*, commented that 'it was the same as the movie' (Akinfenwa) and that 'it was just a repeat' (C258). Their comments suggest that they did not understand how seeing a different production of the play would support their learning. For some students who had not previously studied the play, in Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School, a lack of understanding of the play precluded the possibility of learning from it: 'I never understood the language' (Leicester, Fletcher Comprehensive), and 'it would be better to see it after or imbetween studdying, so it's less confusing' (D150).

There were assumptions about the production's relevance, even for those students who were studying the play: 'we will hardly use it in the future' (B157), and the play was 'not all shown' (B114), so did not reflect the full play as it would be studied in lessons. Student A034 also commented that 'reading the play is much more helpful'. These comments suggest a view of learning that is synonymous with the school curriculum, also provoking comments such as 'we dont study the archuteure' (B027) and 'our studying is not about acting' (Ryan, Henslowe Academy). These students therefore did not recognise the opportunity for learning that other students did, about this play, Shakespeare more generally, and the experience of being in an Elizabethan-style theatre, that is offered by PSwDB.

6.6.2 PSwDB is seen as having uncertain value for future learning

Some students were uncertain about whether the theatre visit would have any benefits for their future learning. Several were 'not sure' (A065), and student A045 commented, 'I'm not sure *yet*' (my emphasis), suggesting a hesitancy to make a judgement so soon after the experience.

Student C122 stated, 'I have the experience so if I need it I can use it', and student C186 commented, 'I don't know what I will learn about Shakespeare in the future'. These comments also imply that these students did not understand a clear purpose for the theatre visit and were not aware of the need to continue studying Shakespeare in Key Stage 4.

Jennifer, from Dekker High School where few students knew much about the play before the visit, told me:

> I think the theatre trip was fun and like just beginning like an insight of what Shakespeare language is actually about and how it's expressed and stuff, but I don't think it will actually help me later on, but I think *Romeo and Juliet* will help because we're looking at it in more detail.

Jennifer's comment recognises that there is value in hearing Shakespeare's words spoken, but suggests that the experience would have had more benefit for her if the play were the one being studied in school. She might have perceived more value in seeing a different play, had she experienced the kind of plot work and comparisons described by Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) in preparation for the theatre visit (see section 4.5). Katherine (The Massinger School) told me, 'I think it would be beneficial because you got to see it, I think it grows I don't know a kind of love for the actual you know play […] but it's not going to help you write an exam'.

The caution within these students' comments, even where they recognise that there may be elements of PSwDB that support their learning about Shakespeare, further support the need for careful framing of the theatre visit by teachers for and to their students before it takes place, so that the students have a clearer understanding of the purpose of the trip and its value for their future lessons. Rosa (The Massinger School) reflected that 'when we actually saw it we didn't realise that it was education, but afterwards, when the teacher asked us questions about how the play was, then we realized we actually learnt things like how the character behaved and everything'. Her comment demonstrates that learning can be subconscious, and that many students may later discover that the trip was valuable for their future studies, encouraged by their teachers, even if they did not think so at the time.

6.6.3 PSwDB is seen as valuable for students studying the performed play

Some students could see that the theatre visit would help them to understand the storyline of *Much Ado About Nothing* 'better' (A084). Student C146 wrote, 'reading it would not make you imagine it so well and having seen it in front would be more understandable', and student A144 commented, 'it gave you a physical thing to learn from if you want to learn the story'. Several students suggested that seeing the play acted out had aided their understanding of the plot (B127) and characters (C003). However, student C114 cautioned, 'they will have modernised it,

so I will need to go over the play on paper too', suggesting an awareness that the version seen was one interpretation of the play, rather than definitive.

Most students who focused on how the production helped them with understanding this play were those who had previously studied it in lessons. Student B003 wrote, 'it will help me remember things about the play', and student C003 commented, 'I know more about the characters'. For these students, the theatre visit cemented the knowledge of the play that they already had, then developed it further.

Student D136, who knew nothing about this play before the theatre visit, also found the experience useful as a way into studying the play: 'We watched it and this helps as usually we would read the play'. Student D050 also commented, 'if we know how it's like beforehand we will know even more in future'. There is a suggestion in these comments that these students were expecting to go on to study *Much Ado About Nothing*, which I understood from Harry, their teacher, was not the case. Student A088 also commented that the experience would only be useful 'if we are studying Much Ado About Nothing'. These comments mostly focus on the visual representation of the text as an aid to understanding the play; arguably this could be more easily achieved through watching a film in lessons. However, student C036 added that the theatre visit was 'a experience I will never forget', suggesting that reflection will be on-going and reinforcing the view that the live audience experience is a crucial element of PSwDB.

It is important that those students who know the play they see performed are encouraged to look beyond the live representation of what they have studied, and those who do not know the play are encouraged to find links with the plays that they do know, to inform their knowledge of Shakespeare more generally. Just as some students can explore different interpretations of the same play, they would then be able to explore connections between different plays.

6.6.4 PSwDB is seen as valuable more generally for studying Shakespeare

Some students took a broader view, commenting that the theatre visit would support their learning about Shakespeare more generally. Student C013 wrote, 'most of Shakespeares play is about love so it kind of gives an idea about what the rest of his plays will be about', and student C026 commented, 'our learning of Shakespeare were mostly on tragedies, this play can teach us more about the comedy'. Developing a greater understanding of Shakespeare's language was also a key learning point for several students. Student A119, who did not know much about the play beforehand, suggested that the production would help with future studies 'because it uses the same language', student C040 commented that 'you can see how they pernouce the word and the long speeches', and student C241 wrote, 'I am more used to the shakespearen language used'.

Some students also commented on the performance aspect of the production. Student A137 wrote, 'I know now how a Shakespeare play is played like', and student C170 suggested that 'it would give me a good imagination for the next Shakespeare play we do in school'. Hermione (The Massinger School) commented directly on how this theatre production could support her future study of different Shakespeare plays:

> The memory of this visit that Shakespeare can be interpreted and played in different ways is like useful because like when we study *Macbeth* for instance we'll see a DVD version of like the way it was meant to be in the play […] but then we can go home and we can see another version perhaps that's more modern or another version that is like completely different […] it basically just opens our eyes to the variety of ways that Shakespeare can be played and it gives us more of a background.

These students' comments suggest that PSwDB helps them to engage with genre, language and performance in ways that they believe will support their future studies of Shakespeare and affect their attitudes towards the plays. Student D097, who wrote that Shakespeare is 'boring. Because it is very old fashion' before the theatre visit, commented, 'now I have higher expectations for Shakespear', showing how PSwDB encourages students to become more interested in the plays, which will then enhance future school studies.

6.6.5 PSwDB is seen as valuable for learning about Elizabethan context

Some students in this study focused on the theatre building when considering the value of their visit for their in-school studies. Student B169 wrote, 'I understand what the Globe was like in Shakespearian England. Improved my contextual knowledge', demonstrating a clear connection between what he could see in front of him and what he would later have to write about in his GCSE examination (see section 1.2). Other students mentioned specific parts of the theatre that they had noticed: 'you know how the stage works and how the actors move around and all the trapdoors and stuff' (C190). Student C039 commented, 'you can understand how or why Shakespear might have done a certain bit in the story to set the stage', and student C073 wrote, 'it helps me vizualise how audiences in Shakespeare's time would have seen it and how Shakespeare would have adapted the play to fit the stage'. Although the production was not designed as an 'original practices' production (see section 5.2.1), these comments offer an appreciation of staging and of Shakespeare writing for that stage that indicate some of the many learning opportunities offered by the theatre building. It also offers an understanding of theatre that is directly transferable to the study of other Shakespeare plays.

Some students also wrote about what it felt like to be in the audience in that space: 'I believe that this will help me with studying Shakespeare because when they speak about the audience

you know how it feels to be a part of it' (B024). Student C092 added, 'now we know how people in Shakesparean time watched the show', and some students compared Elizabethan theatre-going to their own visits to the cinema (C065, C139). Rosa (The Massinger School) summed up the theatre for these students when she told me, 'when you saw the theatre it was like education disguised as entertainment'. Her comment suggests that underlying the fun experience of the trip was a clear learning agenda, of which the theatre itself was a key element. It was also mentioned by teachers as an important aspect of the trip that they could refer to in subsequent lessons.

6.6.6 The long-term value of PSwDB for in-school learning

It seems clear that even before the performance had begun, the theatre building was helping students to access Shakespeare through its architecture. For many of them, this experience of a new environment, very different from what most of them had previously experienced and from what some of them wrote that they expected, was useful for learning about Shakespeare. David (teacher, Fletcher Comprehensive) could see benefits for learning in the space of the theatre which echoed those of the students:

> When you're teaching about groundlings and stuff like that [the students have] actually got a visual image of that quite clearly in their head […] at the very least they will be able to make references to audiences and staging in a way that they will have some access to now […] when they think about Shakespeare in the theatre you know or if they write about it that's what they will automatically picture and that definitely has its benefits.

Persephone (teacher, Henslowe Academy) also commented on the relevance of the theatre space to GCSEs, saying that 'for their exam it just helps them visualise that context and they do have to write about context for Shakespeare'.

More important for Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) was for the students 'to feel enthused in terms of Shakespeare'. She said, 'I would rather they went into their GCSE within a positive attitude towards Shakespearean language and the text and text for performance, appreciating the kind of dramatic component of it'. She added that the contemporary elements included in the production might also help to 'demystify' the plays for the students. In viewing the theatre visit 'as an enrichment opportunity', she said she hoped to get away from the trips and experiences which feed directly into the curriculum. She commented that 'of course it does have an impact academically but I don't think that it is important to test them on it afterwards'. She did not comment directly on that academic impact, but reflected that the whole experience of PSwDB meant that most students approached GCSE Shakespeare positively, which for her students is studied in Year 11. She said:

> There's a feeling that they take with them from that trip […] and that feeling alone and just reminding them of that is a really positive way to start the [GCSE] text, and then of course when you approach the context around it they have at least a sense of having been present within a historical setting.

She was particularly impressed by students' memories of elements of the production two years later, which she put down to its contemporary relevance, even parts that she had herself forgotten.

Although the teachers could each see long-term benefits for their students, they did not necessarily expect the students themselves to appreciate how the theatre visit would help with their learning. David said that 'there is a kind of just eat your vegetables kind of this is good for you and I know it's good for you even if you don't think so kind of thing'. However, some students spoke directly about how seeing the production had affected their attitude to studying Shakespeare. Student C250 said, 'I am more interested in Shakespeare's works', and Rosa (The Massinger School) reflected, 'Shakespear looks more appealing after watching a modernised version of it. So it may incourage me to put more effort on it'. These observations suggest that when asked, many students can see that PSwDB could have some direct positive impact on their future in-school learning about Shakespeare.

6.7 Wider benefits of PSwDB

Comments from students and teachers show that PSwDB is beneficial to the in-school study of Shakespeare. However, it could be suggested that this would be true of any visit to see a performance of a Shakespeare play at Shakespeare's Globe. It is therefore important to try to understand why PSwDB is important as a project, and how it offers some students an opportunity that might otherwise be unavailable to them. Financial constraints are a key reason for this, but not the only one. Social and cultural factors also seem to play a part in the students' awareness of Shakespeare's Globe as a theatre venue and its availability to them as a choice of entertainment, in line with the findings of the TheatreSpace project (O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton and Ewing, 2013).

6.7.1 Financial benefits

The financial support from Deutsche Bank, which covers much of the cost of PSwDB, is important in creating a project that is inclusive. The students' and teachers' comments show clearly that if the tickets to PSwDB were not free, many students either would not or could not visit Shakespeare's Globe. However, the free ticket offer enables teachers to include a whole year group in the trip, regardless of inclination or ability to pay. Teachers can then reference both the

theatre and the production in subsequent lessons, knowing that all, or almost all, of their students participated in the theatre visit.

6.7.1.1 Financial benefits from the teachers' perspectives

Each teacher clearly foresaw problems of inclusion if tickets to the theatre were no longer free. David (Fletcher Comprehensive) suggested that 'if this trip was something like a fiver a head […] I don't think that's unreasonable'; however, for students who were already resistant to a theatre trip, even a small charge would provide the excuse not to go. Anne (The Massinger School) said that she had occasionally allowed a student to miss the trip, as a result of extreme anxiety at being in crowded or public places; her intonation suggested sadness that anyone would be prevented from seeing the production.

Some teachers were particularly concerned about family budgets where students might have to pay for school trips. Lucy (teacher, Pilot Project, Condell Academy) said, 'we have a lot of free school meal students so they don't get the opportunity to go to trips'. She told me:

> We try and take them to as much theatre as possible [but] what we've had with theatres in the past is they want the money up front before we go and that has been a problem with […] students not having the money, parents not being paid that month – that certain day – before we go.

Lucy was adamant that no child should be left behind because of inability to pay, but commented that 'it would be the powers of above that would say yes or not, which is really difficult'. Anne also commented on school budgets:

> Money is really tight for schools, and I know that you know our head teacher will always prioritise what she sees is an incredibly valuable learning experience and will do her best to find the money for that, but you know given that I feel like an experience like this is almost a right for young people, I think it being free feels like a really good thing for them, and it is very supportive of schools when they are struggling.

She described her students as living in a 'more deprived area of London' who would not normally experience theatre or Shakespeare's Globe with their family or friends, and therefore the financial benefits of the project directly affect the cultural and social benefits for them.

6.7.1.2 Financial benefits from the students' perspectives

The students' comments about whether they would have participated in the theatre visit or not if they had been asked to pay for their tickets offered a wide range of reasons for non-attendance, had the trip been optional. Some considered whether they would have chosen to attend based on their attitude towards Shakespeare, others on their ability to pay. Some

comments were more reflective, suggesting that the theatre visit itself had altered their attitudes.

203 students, 39% of those who answered this question, said that they would pay for the theatre visit if necessary. Many of these comments were reflective, based on the knowledge that their trip had been enjoyable, and their responses may have been more cautious without this knowledge. Student C083 stated, 'this play was definitely worth the money', but then countered with 'obviously I do not have any pocket money at the moment', suggesting that she might be unable to afford a similar trip in future, even if she wanted to take part. Others reflected on how the trip offered an opportunity that they otherwise would not have experienced: student B160 wrote, 'I would have gone if I had to pay, because I have never seen a Shakespeare play live before', and student C012 called it 'a gr8 oppertunity & I might not go with family', demonstrating how PSwDB enables students to access new experiences. Student C212 called it 'a once in a lifetime opportunity'.

Of these 203 students, 37 said that they would have gone because the trip would help their learning. Student A066 directly referenced the trip's relevance to his GCSEs, and student B010 commented, 'it would help me for my exam'. Another 15 students wanted to see the venue, which Sam (Fletcher Comprehensive) called 'such an iconic building'; most of these had not been to Shakespeare's Globe before and therefore wanted to experience the theatre for the first time. Other students would have paid for the trip for a variety of individual reasons: 'I like shakespeare's play' (C231); 'I like London' (B018); 'I like watching plays' (A021).

In contrast, 221 students, 42% of those who answered this question, stated that they would not have participated in the theatre visit had they needed to pay for their ticket. Not all used cost as a reason, but this figure demonstrates that PSwDB is engaging with a sizeable cohort of students who would not otherwise see a Shakespeare play performed live. Of these, 70 students would not have chosen to go because 'Shakespeare doesn't interest me' (B094) and 'I would have assumed it would be boring' (D091). Easy access to film versions was also a deterrent for some. Thirteen wrote that they could watch the play through the medium of film, television or social media channels such as YouTube 'for free' (A023), and five students commented that they would rather spend their money on a trip to the cinema (A128), showing a preference for film over theatre as an entertainment genre. Interestingly, these five students all stated that they had enjoyed the theatre visit, although student D011 preferred the 'edited' version offered by film. Their comments suggest that they are perhaps more comfortable with the medium of film, even though their responses on questionnaire 1 showed that theatre was not entirely new to them.

Only eighteen students openly used cost as a reason for not participating in the theatre visit, writing that it would be 'expensive' (A034). Most of these students considered whether they themselves would be able to fund their ticket, commenting that 'I can't afford it' (C143), because 'i'm a student I have no money' (C184), and a further twelve students reflected that 'it wasn't worth it' (A174). Four students suggested that their parents would pay, including Mo (Henslowe Academy), who told me, 'it's not really your choice: your mum would say, "do you want to go?" – you say "no" – she says "well, you're going!"', and student D042, who wrote, 'My mum would've made me'. Student A045 suggested that 'the school should pay for it', while student C059 commented on the number of school trips that students are expected to pay for, implying that another one would be unaffordable. Student B093 was one of two students who wrote that they would only pay if it were for a school trip, linking the theatre experience firmly to school. Others suggested that theatre is not a priority, preferring to 'spend £10 on something more useful or valueable' (A072) or 'on something I need' (C029), since money 'doesn't grow on trees' (C230).

Some students were more ambivalent. 26 students, 5%, didn't know whether they would pay for their tickets, and 73 students, 14%, suggested that other factors would decide whether they attended. These factors included who else was going (D085), who was in the cast (C047), what the reviews had been (Akinfenwa, Henslowe Academy) and what play was being performed (D033). 33 students wrote that the price of the tickets would be the deciding factor. While some wrote in vague terms that 'it depends how much the tickets cost' (A087), others suggested a figure that was affordable to them, such as '£5.00 max' (C121). Student C190 commented, 'if it was like £50 then no but if it was affordable then I would, because Ive never been before and it will be a new experience'. Balancing ideas about the non-monetary value of the trip with an anticipated but unspecified ticket cost seems to be a matter of concern for these students: while they are more positive about the benefits of the theatre visit than those who use cost as an excuse not to take part, these students seem equally nervous about committing their money to the trip. Their dilemma is summed up by student C266: 'if I did have to pay it might of made me feel like I don't need to go but I didn't have to pay so I took part in this amazing trip and it helped me to understand the play much more'. This comment offers strong evidence that while some students could possibly afford to take part in the theatre visit, they would choose not to, missing out on an 'amazing' experience and losing an important opportunity for learning.

The financial support from Deutsche Bank is clearly critical for schools and for students. While some students would choose to take part in the theatre visit, a large number would not. The four schools in this research make the trip compulsory as a result of the free ticket offer, which ensures that all can attend. Subsequent lessons can then refer to the visit in the knowledge that

all have attended, with learning opportunities for all and also greater social and cultural benefits for the students who take part.

6.7.2 Social and cultural benefits

The social and cultural benefits of PSwDB are clearly evident in some of the comments made by both students and teachers. Student C206 wrote that she would have chosen to attend the theatre trip even if the tickets cost money, because 'I would be with my friends and would have enjoyed watching and talking about it after'. Wasima (Dekker High School) told me, 'if my friends went I would go with them, if they didn't go I probably wouldn't go, I'd find something else to do'. Student B177 commented that he would not go 'if it was outside school' but would if it were a school trip because 'I'd go with friends'. There is a sense in these comments that some students feel more comfortable trying new experiences in a group, particularly with those they know well, and that sharing the experience makes it more attractive: London (Fletcher Comprehensive) told me, 'if none of my friends were going I probably wouldn't enjoy it'.

Eleven (The Massinger School) said, 'I think it was good that all of us went because like we get to experience it on the same day like some people don't have to ruin it for others if they went a day earlier'. Her comment was interesting because another school in this study, Fletcher Comprehensive, had divided the year group into two and visited the theatre on two different dates. Students from Fletcher Comprehensive did not comment on this organisational choice, other than to compare the weather they had experienced, when discussing the trip in their post-theatre visit interviews. Eleven's comment suggests that while logistically splitting the cohort may have been easier for teachers, it could have had a detrimental effect on the trip for some students, particularly those in the second group who may have been influenced by comments from the first group. Skylar, also at The Massinger School, agreed that 'it was nice to go the theatre with the whole year group than just like a few classes going cause then it would be just like […] less fun like even though I don't know much people'. For her, even though she had fewer friends in the year group, there was still value in being part of a large, inclusive group. Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) also valued the social aspect of the school trip. She said:

> They enjoy being together in a completely different environment out of the classroom: it's really lovely to see them interact like that […] it's the shared experience – I don't think that they get very often either, so being able to go and watch something together like that and talk about it together – laugh with one another – nudge each other – joke about a character or something that's happened – I just don't think that happens a lot.

Anne's comment clearly demonstrates that while student interactions about the play are valuable in terms of learning about Shakespeare, PSwDB is far more than a curriculum intervention for the students in her school.

Ezra (Dekker High School) could see that there were advantages and disadvantages to taking a whole year group to the theatre. She told me, 'there were actually some people who actually did want to watch it […] but then at the same time there were some people in our year who only went to mess around'. However, she continued:

> If you automatically said "oh, they normally don't behave so you can't let them come on the trip," there's also unfair cause maybe this time they might have actually watched the play, and something – the way they reacted or what they thought about it – could have been quite useful, quite interesting.

Ezra clearly understood that it is not always possible to tell beforehand who the more disruptive students might be, and could see that the theatre trip offered all students an opportunity to learn and to contribute to the experience of their peers.

Ezra also valued the social aspect of the theatre visit:

> When we first left it was quite fun cause everyone was still in – not in shock but – everyone was still talking about the play, but then the thing that was a bit annoying is that when you were talking to certain people about the play like everyone got separated cause some people were going a different way, some people got on a different train, so it was harder to talk about it.

She did not complete questionnaire 2 but she had written on questionnaire 1 that 'I adore Shakespeare and his plays', and her comment about the journey home suggests that she had a lot to say about the performance she had just seen. Although she had not previously been to Shakespeare's Globe, she had attended other theatres, and her words show a keen awareness of how the performance itself is only one part of the social event.

The cultural opportunity offered by travelling to Shakespeare's Globe was important for Skylar (The Massinger School). She said that she liked 'walking on the [Millennium] bridge […] and like there's a river […] and like I like those kind of experiences'. Anne (teacher, The Massinger School) told me:

> It's some things that don't seem huge maybe to other schools or other communities but for our students just getting off the tube, doing the walk from Mansion House over the bridge, looking at London in a really different way – they do not get a lot of time at their leisure to just wander over – walk around – London and see things.

Harry (teacher, Dekker High School) suggested that this is also true for his students: 'for some of them they've never been on the tube before – by the time they're in Year 9 – they haven't seen the Thames or St Paul's'. PSwDB offers students in these schools a cultural experience that Anne suggested 'other […] young people their age will be getting all the time'. Ann and Harry's comments about the differences between their students and other young people demonstrate

in practice the original intention at the heart of Deutsche Bank's corporate social responsibility programme Born to Be (see section 1.4).

6.8 Conclusion

PSwDB clearly offers a valuable contribution to secondary school students' experiences of Shakespeare. 81% said that, overall, they had enjoyed the production, and 62% were confident that the theatre visit had added to their knowledge of *Much Ado About Nothing,* Shakespeare's plays more generally, Shakespeare's language, and/or the historical context in which Shakespeare wrote and produced his plays. While some students suggested that it was too soon to know how useful the trip had been, their teachers were clear that this experience would be referenced directly in future lessons where they were teaching Shakespeare, regardless of which play was being studied.

The attention to detail which many students demonstrated in their reflective comments was impressive, in their references to Shakespeare's Globe as a building, to the production that they saw and to their experiences as audience members. The questions on questionnaire 2 seemed to provoke students into considering what "Shakespeare" is for them. The change of gender from Don John to Donna Joan created a considerable reaction from audiences during the performances I observed but did not seem problematic for most students, with those who had noticed the change being mostly in favour of it. However, the contemporary elements of the production, such as the use of mobile phones and the superhero costumes, were much more divisive, since they conflicted with the students' expectations for historical accuracy and for the play to have been performed "as Shakespeare intended". This belief in a "correct" version of the play highlights a lack of understanding of the interpretative nature of theatre as a genre amongst many of these students. It also suggests a belief that the performance should have been more clearly related to in-school learning about Shakespeare.

PSwDB clearly demonstrated to many students that Shakespeare can be enjoyable, with some commenting that the theatre visit had favourably altered their attitudes towards studying the plays in future. There also seemed to be a much greater ability to relate the play to the students' own lives than had been evident in answers to questionnaire 1, particularly in relation to the presentation of gender and to the use of social media to gossip and lie about other people. These were two of the key themes that director Oakley had wanted to highlight for the students when planning his production (see section 5.2.2), and the students' comments suggest that he was largely successful. The contemporary presentation of Claudio and Hero in this production caused some students to situate them within 2018 society and to relate Hero's forgiveness of Claudio directly to the way the students themselves might behave. Their comments also imply that

during the performance, these students were able to suspend disbelief and enter into the world of the play, believing in the characters even though they knew that they were watching fiction.

The schools participating in this research each made PSwDB compulsory for their year 9 students. Many students would not have taken part in the trip had it been optional, and would therefore have missed out on what some of them agreed was a beneficial experience. Their teachers also commented that for some, the journey into Central London was itself an important addition to their cultural experiences. In addition, both students and teachers valued the social experience of a whole year group experiencing a school trip together. This inclusivity was enabled by the free ticket offer at the heart of PSwDB, and offers important data showing how important theatre can be for those who would not choose to attend, given the option. This offers a particularly important point for reflection for other schools who do not choose to take a whole cohort of students to see a PSwDB production.

There are, however, continued challenges for PSwDB in aiming to support all students with their Shakespeare studies. Not all who participated in this research understood why they were being taken to the theatre and not all found it a positive or useful experience, according to their post-theatre visit questionnaires and interviews. The theatre production challenged expectations and the theatre building itself caused difficulties for some, particularly with reference to the weather. Some comments demonstrated that, at the theatre as much as in lessons, students expect a much more closely guided experience than PSwDB offers. Including a plot summary in the theatre programme is one student suggestion that would offer that guidance. The data clearly demonstrate that no approach suits all students. However, since 42% stated that they would not have attended given the option, PSwDB is engaging with a sizeable cohort of students that would not normally choose to see Shakespeare performed live.

7 Discussion of Findings

O this learning, what a thing it is!

The Taming of the Shrew (1.2.153)

7.1 Introduction

My research question for this study asked:

How do students respond to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank?

I used six sub-questions to explore students' responses to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, taking into account some of their different and multiple contexts from a sociocultural perspective. This chapter now seeks to draw out themes from the ideas that recur across all three findings chapters. Those themes can then be related to previous research into students' experiences of Shakespeare, in line with Punch and Oancea's suggestion that 'the accumulation of evidence across many studies' offers opportunities to draw out more general ideas (2014, p.48). These interpretations of the data may therefore be relevant in other settings.

The data was generated for this research from a pool of over 800 Year 9 students, aged 13-14, in four London state secondary schools. These schools made the theatre visit compulsory for their students, which enabled me to generate data from some students who either would not normally be able to or would not choose to attend the theatre. This group is missing from much research into theatre for young people (Sinclair, 2014). The data therefore offer a wide range of opinions about Shakespeare, many of them elicited by open-ended questions that gave the students the opportunity to answer in their own words. As a result, the discussion in this chapter offers an important contribution to the literature concerned with the study of Shakespeare in secondary schools and live theatre as a tool for learning.

7.2 The cycle of dependence in the Shakespeare classroom

The data generated by the pre-theatre visit questionnaires and interviews show that many secondary school students enjoy studying Shakespeare's plays and have positive attitudes towards the challenge of the language, in contrast with the more generalized negative views expressed in the literature (see section 2.4). These students accept that the plays are difficult, but while that difficulty is problematic for many, some actively enjoy it and feel proud when they succeed at understanding the language and plots (see section 4.2).

However, the data also suggest that teachers are regarded as essential for understanding Shakespeare, since most students appear to regard Shakespeare's plays as a subject for examination rather than as a form of entertainment and for enjoyment. This dependence on teachers seems to develop into a cycle, where a focus on assessment criteria encourages students to rely on their teachers to explain in detail what Shakespeare's language and stories mean, in the pursuit of an apparent "right" answer to examination questions. Classroom activities must therefore, in the students' view, contribute directly to finding this right meaning, with the expert teacher as the final arbiter of whether the students have been successful. This belief is evident in many comments about activities in the classroom, which demonstrate concern that meaning-making without the teacher's direct influence will result in incorrect responses to the plays. Teachers, whose work appears to be directed towards achieving student success in high-stakes examinations, seem to choose teaching methods that then appear to encourage that dependence (Coles, 2009). Few students made comments that suggested that they were building on the skills developed during earlier encounters with Shakespeare's plays, and with other texts, to try to understand Shakespeare's plots and language without teacher intervention. This finding supports Erricker's suggestion that goal-focused students look for the teacher to act as 'translator' for difficult texts so that they can succeed in assessment tasks (2014, p.86). Rather than the focus being on process without considering content and purpose (Biesta, 2013), the emphasis in the Shakespeare classroom seems to be on content and purpose without paying attention to process. This results in 'monological' rather than 'dialogical' learning (Biesta, 2013, p.72), which reproduces knowledge and prevents students from constructing and negotiating their own meanings in the classroom (Wertsch and Kazak, 2011).

The cycle of dependence therefore occurs outside the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). The ZPD is the optimal space for developing skills and knowledge, for the process of learning, building on previously established knowledge with the support of more able peers and adults. As the student learns to do more without support, the ZPD moves so that it is always ahead of what they can do on their own. However, without continued scaffolding, particularly from expert English teachers, there seems to be a belief amongst students that they will miss something vital, be unable to follow the story, and as a result be unable to perform well in assessments, which are often seen as the main and often only reason for studying Shakespeare. This suggests that they are not engaging with Shakespeare within the optimal space of the ZPD. To bring learning within the ZPD would therefore require changes in the support given to students, to enable them to become more independent learners, bringing together process, content and purpose as Biesta suggests (2013).

The focus on written assessment also seems to increase as students move up through the school: some students at The Massinger School remembered more drama-based work around Shakespeare's plays in year 7. This movement from performance-based study to written analysis of the plays seems to run in parallel with a steady reduction in the fun and enjoyment experienced by these students in their Shakespeare lessons (see section 4.2.4.5). As high-stakes written examinations approach, the belief in the need to understand every word of Shakespeare's text becomes more evident, and with it an apparent increase, rather than decrease, in the students' dependence on their teachers for support (see section 4.2.4). Even when lessons do include discursive or drama-based activities, students want their teachers to keep them on task without getting distracted; to help them find the correct responses to the discussion topic; and to find the correct way to perform their lines when acting out scenes from the play. Their concerns about finding the 'right' meaning even when undertaking practical activities further supports the idea of a cycle of dependence.

In addition, students commented on difficulties with discipline and focus during drama lessons that suggest that creative practices are unusual in their lessons. Despite Gibson's work in the 1980s and subsequent proponents of active approaches to teaching Shakespeare, such as Stredder (2009) and Banks (2013), it seems that classroom practice remains dominated by non-drama-based methods of teaching. The students showed reliance on their teachers to maintain classroom discipline so that learning could take place, and seemed to want more detailed explanations of the intentions behind each activity undertaken in lessons. For them, understanding the plays seems to equate to the knowledge required for written assessments, rather than the development of personal responses to the plays through exploratory work, even though a personal response is required by the GCSE assessment objectives (see section 1.2). This suggests that students need to develop the confidence to explore and interpret texts independently without fear of misunderstanding or of missing the 'right' answer; they need the space to take risks in the classroom and to experiment with different interpretations, through collective discovery, involving teachers and learners together, that is 'not reproductive but constructive or generative' (Biesta, 2013, p.72).

The cycle of dependence also means that young people need explicit instruction to make connections between Shakespeare's works and their own lives. Teachers need to counter accusations of Shakespeare's irrelevance to contemporary society, by demonstrating that although the stories may have specific references to Elizabethan and Jacobean context, the themes that they explore still resonate. The assumed lack of relevance is demonstrated clearly by the students' expectations for Shakespeare in performance and by their responses to the contemporary elements of the production they saw, particularly the idea that this production

was ‘not very Shakespearen [sic]’ (A074). It is not clear where some of the students’ ideas about Shakespeare in performance originated, since these were not necessarily reflected in the film versions many of them had seen in lessons, but the demand in Key Stage 4 for students to situate texts in their original contexts of production seems to have filtered down into Key Stage 3, without meeting the accompanying requirement for students to develop a personal response to those texts (see section 1.2).

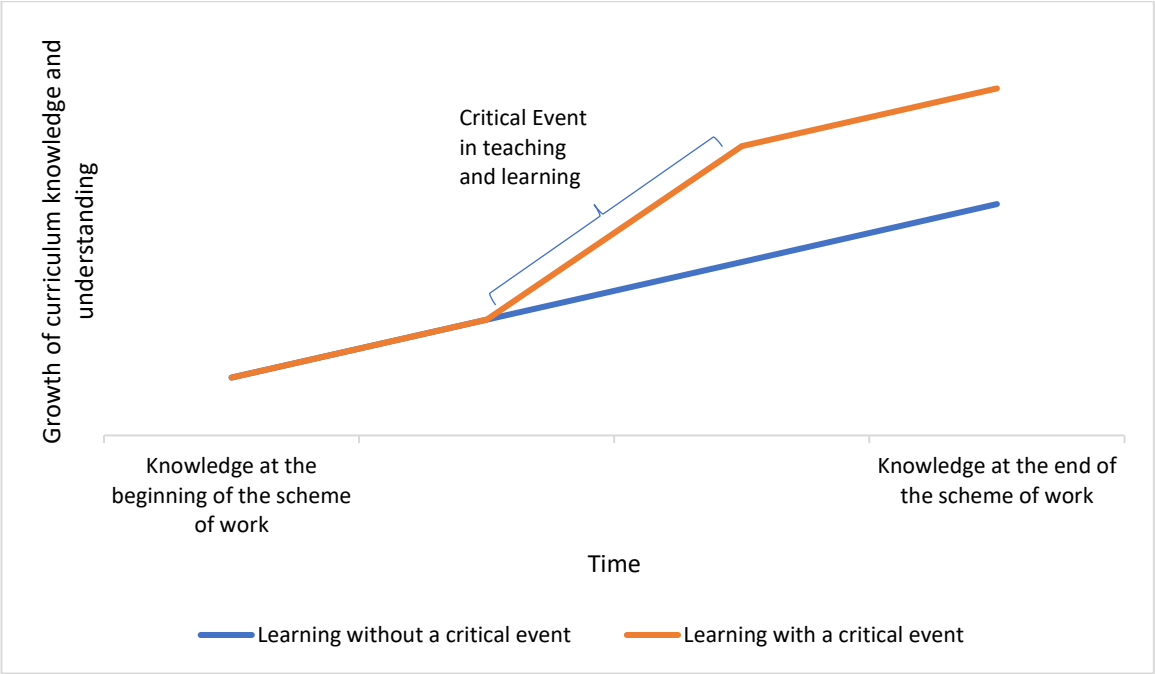
It is not always clear whether individual teachers in these four schools choose which texts are studied, when, and how they are assessed, particularly in Key Stage 3, or whether these are policy decisions imposed on them by a school’s leadership team. Play choice may also be affected by the availability of texts and resources (Elliott, 2017), and policy decisions may cover how texts are taught, so that teachers do not have autonomy in the classroom. In addition, access to training such as that offered by Globe Education as part of PSwDB may not be accessible for some teachers, because of personal priorities, other commitments and/or school policies, potentially limiting the development of their pedagogical and subject knowledge. All these factors may influence the way that teachers introduce their students to Shakespeare’s plays. However, from the student’s perspective, the teacher is the expert who will explain the chosen play; there seems to be very little attempt by the students to develop the skills necessary to approach a play without the teacher’s assistance.

Young people clearly value their relationships with their teachers. While the students in this research were able to critique their lessons, it was noticeable that fewer in each school commented on what does not help them to learn than what does help them to learn, possibly indicating a reluctance to criticise their teachers directly (see section 4.2.4). However, the cycle of dependence in the Shakespeare classroom suggests that submission to the teacher as expert ingrains behaviour that inhibits students’ development of independent skills which would help with studying Shakespeare in future years.

7.3 The theatre visit as a critical event in teaching and learning

PSwDB offers students the opportunity to attend Shakespeare’s Globe to see a live performance of a Shakespeare play, which for the majority is a novel and exciting experience. This can clearly be defined as a critical event in teaching and learning (Woods, 1993). A critical event in teaching and learning breaks up lesson routines and accelerates learning when integrated into the school curriculum. Chart 11 illustrates the effect of this acceleration and demonstrates how, over the same period of time, students can develop more knowledge and understanding of the curriculum as a result of a critical event. This could be either breadth or depth of knowledge. Students of course do not learn as uniformly or as evenly as this chart suggests (see section 2.2).

Figure 12: An illustration of the effect on student learning of a critical event in teaching and learning



In addition to accelerating learning, a well-framed theatre visit can help to disrupt the cycle of dependence, since students cannot rely on their teachers to explain in detail what is happening on-stage or the meaning of the words spoken, although I observed that some teachers did occasionally support their students with understanding the play during the performances. The student experience of being an audience member in Shakespeare's Globe is thus paradoxically both disconnected from school experiences of Shakespeare, since it is not directly mediated by the teacher, and at the same time is closely connected to school studies as a critical event in teaching and learning.

It has been established elsewhere that teachers are crucial to students' access to theatre experiences (Donelan with Sallis, 2014). My research has found that most students had seen a live theatre production prior to their visit to Shakespeare's Globe to see *Much Ado About Nothing* (see section 4.4). However, their additional comments suggest that prior theatre visits were also organised by their schools, and the number who would not have visited a theatre at all would probably have been significantly higher, had teachers not provided those opportunities. The TheatreSpace project acknowledged that 'one of the problems with researching young people as audience is accessing those who do not attend or would not normally attend the theatre' (Sinclair, 2014, p.43). The decision to take a whole year group to PSwDB is therefore important because it offers a social and cultural experience to students who might not otherwise participate in theatre visits; including such schools in this research, where 42% stated that they would not have chosen to attend, has enabled the previously unheard voices of non-theatre-going young people to be included.

Teachers are also crucial for framing the theatre experience beforehand, supporting their students during the performance, and giving space and time for reflections afterwards (Donelan with Sallis, 2014). Framing of the theatre visit is important for all students, not just those who have not previously studied the play they are going to see. Most students in this study clearly enjoyed the PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, whether or not they knew the story beforehand and/or had studied the play in school lessons. However, inadequate framing for some students left them confused about the purpose of their theatre visit, evidenced by the boy from Henslowe Academy trying to follow the play in his copy of the text, and by other students who appeared to be overwhelmed by the theatre space and by the contemporary aspects of the production (see section 5.3.4). While teachers stated that they wanted their students to have a fun experience not necessarily linked directly to the curriculum, the vast novelty space (Orion and Hofstein, 1994), created by an apparent absence of minimal framing of the visit, seemed to create confusion and difficulties with understanding for some in the audience. These students appeared to need some narrowing of potential learning opportunities, which suggests that they are used to having their focus directed during school-related activities and find a lack of boundaries problematic. This was also apparent in the comments from students who stated a preference for darkened auditoria where spotlights clearly direct their gaze, helping them to follow the action on-stage without distractions (see section 6.3.2). Those with little or no theatre literacy would particularly have benefitted from some prior suggestions for their focus during the performance that would have narrowed the novelty space. Very few students had chosen to seek out information about Shakespeare's Globe or the production for themselves, to help fill this gap, showing how important framing is to prepare students for their theatre visit. This highlights the need to position a critical event in teaching and learning carefully within a scheme of work, to ensure that students can benefit as much as possible from their experiences. This further demonstrates the dependence of students on their teachers for understanding the play and for explicitly directing their focus towards specific learning outcomes. Enjoyment as a goal of the theatre visit does not appear to have occurred to them.

A small number of students also relied on their teachers for support with understanding the play during the performances. While many teachers appeared to let their students experience the production without interruption, some students appeared to be repeatedly asking their teachers for clarification of the plot and characters. In addition, some used the theatre programme to explain who the characters were, providing support for understanding where teachers were not immediately available. However, some apparently expected the production to be difficult to understand because it was a Shakespeare play, part of their wider belief in the difficulty of Shakespeare. This difficulty may have been exacerbated by the way this production used

contemporary elements such as mobile phones which challenged students' ideas of what "Shakespeare" is (see section 7.5 below), and by the shortened text which increased the pace of events on-stage (see section 6.3.1.1). The contemporary elements divided opinion amongst the students, creating a love-hate relationship with the production for some who enjoyed their visit overall but who found it unhelpful for their in-school study of Shakespeare.

The findings of this research show that theatre offers a valid and useful way of developing students' understanding of Shakespeare, as well as being an enjoyable social and cultural experience. It was clear at several points during the production that the students were listening intently to and understanding the words spoken, even though many had not previously studied this play. Having been asked to consider whether the trip was valuable for their future Shakespeare studies, many students could see short-term benefits from their theatre visit. Most students' reflections suggest a deep engagement with the contemporary production of *Much Ado About Nothing* that they watched, and many seemed to understand the play with very little support from their teachers, in direct contrast with their pre-theatre visit questionnaires and interviews, where dependence on teachers for understanding was a recurring theme. Their teachers could also see how PSwDB has long-term effects for their students' studies, having organised the trip for a number of years in each school and therefore having some longitudinal, if anecdotal, evidence of the value of the trip from older students revisiting Shakespeare in lessons in subsequent years (see section 6.6.6). This clearly supports the view that the visit to Shakespeare's Globe to see a PSwDB production is a critical event in teaching and learning.

7.4 The theatre visit as a social and cultural critical event

Woods' (1993) idea of a critical event in teaching and learning relates specifically to a one-off event that disrupts the classroom routine and accelerates learning; as such it is a positive and transformative experience that enhances the student experience of the curriculum. I would argue that PSwDB offers more than this definition of a critical event implies, and can be seen more broadly as a "social and cultural critical event". I define a social and cultural critical event as an event which offers a new, memorable experience that has a noticeable effect upon someone's understanding and experiences of the social and cultural world around them. Whereas a critical event in teaching and learning is a linear experience focused on developing curriculum knowledge and understanding, a social and cultural critical event is an holistic experience centred on the needs of and benefits for the student. The different elements of the social and cultural critical event all contribute to this experience, regardless of whether they directly affect curriculum knowledge and understanding, and are particularly important for those students whose own social and cultural contexts do not usually include such experiences. The theatre visit is visualised as a social and cultural critical event in Figure 12. The students are

shown here in the centre, but are always in relationship and interacting with the elements in the three layers that surround them.

Figure 13: The school trip as a social and cultural critical event

Figure 12 shows the students at the centre of a layered experience. The three layers then highlight firstly the theatrical values of PSwDB, secondly the benefits of the project, and thirdly the opportunities for learning, when 'learning' is used in its widest sense. The three layers are independent of each other and can rotate, so that novelty does not relate only to curricular elements of a school trip, such as prior learning and post-visit lessons and reflections, but may equally relate to any other elements in the second and third layers of the chart. Similarly, the event itself may offer both cultural and curricular opportunities for learning. At the same time, the different layers and their elements are interconnected. Any combination of the elements in the three different layers may therefore contribute to a student's experience of a social and cultural critical event, and these may be different for each student experiencing the same event.

For example, the theatre programmes, present in the outer layer as 'keepsakes/artefacts', were used by some students during the performance while other students told me that they did not receive one. Putting the students rather than the curriculum at the centre of school trip design changes its focus and acknowledges that a school trip offers wider benefits that purely for curriculum subject knowledge.

7.4.1 Theatrical values

The four theatrical values of PSwDB are novelty, inclusivity, liveness and interactivity. These four values are also found in Theatre in Education projects that visit schools. However, PSwDB offers students the opportunity to encounter different spaces as they travel across London and at Shakespeare's Globe itself. This increases the novelty space of the visit (Orion and Hofstein, 1994), which could then result in reduced learning, where learning is seen narrowly as attaining curriculum knowledge. In contrast, viewing PSwDB as a social and cultural critical event means that a larger novelty space offers positive and multiple opportunities for learning, where learning is understood as social and cultural development as well as adding to curriculum knowledge.

The free ticket offer ensures that PSwDB is inclusive, and the addition of British Sign Language signed performances and relaxed performances has enabled young people with a variety of learning difficulties to access the project. The liveness and interactivity of the theatre production also contribute directly to students' experiences and understanding of the play. Meaning-making as part of the audience in Shakespeare's Globe during the performance occurs between audience members as well as between the audience and the actors (Lanier, 2002), and could offer a more positive explanation for some of the conversations between students and teachers that I observed during some performances, in contrast with the idea of dependence discussed above. Some student-to-student communication was clearly visible in my observations, particularly amongst students from Henslowe Academy who sat in the upper gallery and could therefore see each other across the open space of the theatre. Other communication was less obvious, such as the apparent influence of a more vocal school on the students from The Massinger School, who themselves became more vocal as the performance progressed, supporting the idea of emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo and Rapson, 1994). The actors also encouraged the students to participate in the production itself, through their actions on-stage and as they passed through the yard at the centre of the theatre space. This social and collaborative creation of meaning during each performance contributed directly to the levels of enjoyment expressed by the students in their post-show questionnaires and interviews and contrasts strongly with their experiences of Shakespeare on film discussed in section 4.2.4.4.

7.4.2 Benefits

School visits are not always inclusive as a result of a focus on the costs and on curricular requirements. As a result, the social and cultural benefits of a trip can be ignored or treated as less important. However, the support from Deutsche Bank means that PSwDB is financially inclusive. Although financial considerations do not appear to have been researched explicitly, the teachers who participated in this study each spoke about the benefits of the free ticket offer which relieved them of the pressure of finding money from school budgets to support those students who would not have been able to afford to pay for a ticket. The alternative would have been to have made the trip optional, thereby reducing the opportunity for developing curriculum knowledge as well as its potential as a social and cultural critical event.

In addition, many students valued the theatre trip for its contribution to their knowledge about Shakespeare and their understanding of his language, and for its addition to their contextual knowledge about Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre practices (see section 6.6). There are therefore clear curricular benefits for the students, in line with the project's desire to support in-school learning for students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to see Shakespeare performed live at Shakespeare's Globe.

PSwDB is also an important cultural experience for students. My findings show that for most students, Shakespeare is a school subject and not part of their wider family culture (see section 4.3). This suggests that the majority are already at a cultural disadvantage *if* Shakespeare is deemed culturally important in English society, and the position of Shakespeare as the only compulsory author studied within the requirements of the National Curriculum implies strongly that he is (see section 1.2). PSwDB therefore has the potential to add considerably to students' cultural knowledge, allowing them to speak about experiencing Shakespeare in a context that they would not otherwise have known. The theatre is an iconic building in central London, offering a unique experience for its audiences as the only London theatre that attempts to recreate the performance conditions of an early seventeenth century theatre, with its combination of the open roof, shared light, thrust stage and standing audience in the yard. Without PSwDB, many students participating in this research would not have experienced this space.

The social benefits of PSwDB are numerous. Social aspects of school trips have occasionally been considered, for example by Larsen and Jenssen (2004) and DeWitt and Hohenstein (2010), but do not appear to have been prioritised by researchers to date. The social aspects of PSwDB include travelling to Shakespeare's Globe as a student group; gathering on the South Bank before the performance; being an audience member in the theatre itself, along with hundreds

of other students from several other schools; and the journey back from the theatre, where students could express their immediate, emotional responses to the production with their friends (Sinclair, Adams and O'Toole, 2014). The students' comments suggest that many would not have chosen to participate in the theatre visit, given that choice. However, most students enjoyed the trip, particularly the social aspect as part of a large group of friends, with several saying that they would not have chosen to see the production unless their friends were also planning to see it. The teachers commented that it is very rare for whole year groups to go on school trips, and the students themselves were aware of this rarity.

A further social benefit of the theatre visit was the development of understanding amongst many of the students that themes in Shakespeare's plays remain relevant to contemporary society (see section 6.3.3). Before the production, few students could find any connections between their in-school studies of the plays and their own lives; a couple of students suggested that they were too young to experience similar events, and some had experienced or knew others who had experienced racism, but otherwise Shakespeare lacked any relevance to them (see section 4.3.3). In contrast, the reactions during the production to contemporary elements such as the costumes and the use of mobile phones, and the comments on post-show questionnaires about lessons learned from the production, showed how easily most students managed to see relevance in this version of the play. Many commented on the link between the play and their experiences of social media, gossip, truth and lies, showing how the production helped these students to articulate ideas about contemporary societal behaviour. The production could therefore be said to contribute to the students' moral development as well, as some were able to reflect on how one person's actions can affect another, and on broader abstract concepts such as good and evil. These findings suggest that in the curriculum as students experience it currently, relating the themes in Shakespeare's plays to contemporary society is not a priority for teachers; GCSE assessment objective 3 states specifically that students must relate texts to 'the contexts in which they were written' (see Table 1 on page 21 of this thesis), which situates texts historically but does not link them to the students' own social experiences. Teachers who do draw out parallels with contemporary society would seem to be in the minority. The contemporary PSwDB production therefore had an important effect on many students in showing how Shakespeare can be relevant to contemporary society in contrast with their earlier comments.

7.4.3 Opportunities for learning

The individual elements of the theatre visit each offer opportunities for learning. For some students, the journey itself was a novel experience. All four schools in this research used the London Underground to travel to and from the theatre, a form of transport that is clearly not

part of some students' normal daily lives. The journey home from the theatre in particular offered them 'critical opportunities for heightening the theatre experience, building meaning-making and consolidating their decision to commit to what they have experienced' (Sinclair, Adams and O'Toole, 2014, p.193). While some students were allowed to make their own way home from the theatre separately from the main school group, others were disappointed to be parted from their friends when boarding the train, leaving them unable to discuss their reactions to the performance. Those who managed to remain with their close friends apparently discussed what they had seen in great detail. These immediate reactions to the performance, evidenced by the excited buzz of reaction I observed at the end of the performances I attended as students left the theatre, are important evidence of the social nature of theatre, and of some of the effect that this production had on its student audiences (see section 5.3.4.3).

Importantly, the event itself is only one of eight elements of the school visit that offer opportunities for learning. While the event may nominally be the reason for the trip, the venue, the journey, the group with whom the event is experienced and artefacts such as the theatre programme are all recognised as important elements of the whole theatre experience, contributing to theatre literacy (Burton, Bundy and Ewing, 2013). The teachers who participated in this research were very clear that some of their students' cultures did not involve travel into London, theatre or live Shakespeare, in line with Rogoff's (2003) understanding of how different cultures value different types of knowledge and participate in different practices. The theatre literacy of these students would have been minimal, and PSwDB therefore offered them an opportunity that they may not previously have known existed.

The venue is also important, in offering students the opportunity to explore what was for the majority a new space. This is an important difference from Theatre in Education projects that visit schools, using spaces that are known to students such as the school hall (see section 2.3.4). The novelty of the space of Shakespeare's Globe, the openness of the roof and yard, and the use of daylight to light the stage and audience all contribute to the audiences' behaviour in that space. Lefebvre writes that 'activity in space is restricted by that space' (1991, p.143), and this is as true of theatres as of any other social space. However, the physical conditions of Shakespeare's Globe are less restrictive than those of other theatres with darkened auditoria and no standing room, permitting behaviours that are not usually found in theatres (see section 2.3.2). In addition, the low levels of theatre literacy for some students mean that their behaviour is not limited by knowledge of social expectations and/or cultural practices (see section 2.2.2).

7.4.4 Summary

PSwD is a social and cultural critical event in the lives of those students who attend, adding to their understanding of the social and cultural world in which they live, as well as supporting their learning about Shakespeare as part of the curriculum. The design of PSwDB offers students a novel, rare, social experience with their peers to travel beyond school and visit an iconic London landmark to see Shakespeare performed live. This enhances their cultural competence and gives them a unique opportunity to make meaning with and from the production they see in a venue that clearly upsets their expectations of both Shakespeare and theatre. In addition, the style of PSwDB productions makes Shakespeare relevant and authentic to many of them, encouraging debate about what 'Shakespeare' is. The financial support from Deutsche Bank that enables Shakespeare's Globe to offer PSwDB free of charge to London state secondary schools ensures that those least socially and/or culturally likely to choose to participate in the theatre visit can benefit from these opportunities. The effects of these experiences can never fully be assessed (Robinson, 1993), but by putting the students at the centre of the theatre visit, rather than the curriculum, it is clear that as a social and cultural critical event, PSwDB makes an important contribution to the lived experiences of the students that attend.

7.5 What "Shakespeare" is for young people

PSwDB also challenges students' understanding of what "Shakespeare" is, engaging them in meaning-making in collaboration with the actors on-stage, offering them an alternative to the versions of Shakespeare's plays encountered in the classroom, and immersing them in Shakespeare's language, which the theatrical context seems to make accessible for them, even when they have no previous knowledge of the play being performed.

The findings suggest that, prior to their theatre visit, many students in this research had a fixed idea of 'Shakespeare' as a historical figure who wrote plays that are difficult to understand, and that should be performed as historical artefacts with 'old' costumes and in 'posh' voices. It was unclear where this view had originated, and it may be associated with a more general societal view of Shakespeare as dating from the sixteenth century and as high culture, rather than a result of school lessons. The students' fixed ideas seem to be exacerbated by the filmed versions of Shakespeare's plays watched in school, although some films, such as *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996), include extensive contemporary elements to update the story. As a result, the contemporary PSwDB production seemed to upset their expectations of what a performance of a Shakespeare play should be. For many, this was a positive experience, demonstrating that the plays can be enjoyable and can have contemporary relevance. It was clear from some comments that the production demonstrated the interpretative nature of theatre, with students

developing some understanding that there are a range of performance choices made in any production.

However, many students in this research view Shakespeare as an examination topic, a necessary hurdle to overcome in order to gain good GCSE results, without seeing how the plays are relevant to their lives in the present, and without understanding how this knowledge will contribute to their lives in future. Shakespeare is also difficult to understand, with language and syntax that are very different from the students' own daily speech. There therefore seems to be a disconnect between what the students saw on stage and what they experience in school, particularly since most could follow the plot, even if they had little or no knowledge of the story beforehand. At its most basic, this disconnect shows itself in comments about the theatre production being a fun experience, whereas studying Shakespeare is not fun. Other students, perhaps influenced by the requirement to study the contexts of production of the texts explored in lessons, stated that this was not Shakespeare because it was a contemporary production and did not represent the "Shakespeare" studied in school.

The 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing* clearly challenged many students' perceptions of what "Shakespeare" is. It appeared to upset expectations of Shakespeare in performance, demonstrating that the plays can be contemporary and relevant while remaining faithful to the text. It showed how theatre is an interpretative art form, developing the students' theatre literacy as well as their understanding of this play and of Shakespeare more generally. PSwDB therefore offers an important opportunity for students to understand that "Shakespeare" is not a fixed entity, a historical figure whose writing has become canonical literature, but unfixed, adaptable, relevant and accessible to them in performance as well as through textual study in school.

7.6 Chapter Summary

PSwDB clearly offers an important experience for the students who attend. As a critical event in teaching and learning, it disrupts the cycle of dependence that seems prevalent in the Shakespeare classroom and demonstrates that Shakespeare's plays can be relevant and accessible to young people in contemporary society.

Teachers play a crucial role in students' experiences of Shakespeare, both in the classroom and at the theatre. However, in school, they are constrained by the curriculum and examination assessment criteria, by the limited time allocated to the teaching of English, and by how they respond to these constraints which seem to increasingly focus students' encounters with Shakespeare's plays on textual analysis as they progress through secondary school. The theatre

visit therefore offers an important opportunity to break the cycle of dependence, accelerating student development and knowledge as a critical event in teaching and learning (Woods, 1993). with some prior framing by teachers, PSwDB appears to give students the confidence to approach Shakespeare without the intense reliance on teachers that their pre-theatre visit comments suggested they find necessary. It also manages to demonstrate to many students how Shakespeare can be relevant in the 21st century.

PSwDB is also an important social and cultural critical event in the lives of these students, offering an experience that is outside of their usual social and cultural frames of reference. It offers a different environment for learning and a different, live, immersive experience of Shakespeare, where engagement with the play is outside of the control of the teacher. Additionally, travel to and from the venue and the experience of the space of Shakespeare's Globe itself in the company of their peers offer students opportunities that are rare and novel for many of them.

This research has demonstrated that young people have a much greater capacity for engaging with Shakespeare both in school and at the theatre than has previously been demonstrated in the literature. The findings suggest that projects such as PSwDB are important because they disrupt the students' usual experiences of Shakespeare, accelerating learning and bringing it into the ZPD, where students can then develop the confidence and skills to approach Shakespeare's plays independently. The reach of PSwDB to over 20,000 students each year suggests that as a project it could have a considerable and lasting effect on the lives of the young people who attend, as a social and cultural critical event as well as supporting their in-school learning. It therefore offers an important and influential contribution to their social and cultural life experiences and development.

8 Conclusion

> And 'tis a kind of good deed to say well;
> And yet words are no deeds.
> *All is True (Henry VIII)* (3.2.154-155)

8.1 Introduction

This thesis has explored the responses of students aged 13 to 14 years old in four London state secondary schools to the 2018 Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank (PSwDB) production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Those responses were captured through observations during the performances and through post-theatre visit questionnaires and interviews, compared to the students' pre-theatre visit experiences of Shakespeare. This final chapter reflects on the research undertaken. It summarises the findings that answer the research questions listed in section 1.5 and considers how these make a new contribution to existing knowledge. It then looks at how those findings could be applied in future. It also considers areas for further research which could extend the findings of this study, to further develop our understanding of young people's experiences of Shakespeare and how theatre visits can be considered a positive contribution to those experiences.

8.2 Answering the research questions

My main research question for this study was:

How do students respond to Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank?

The broad understanding of "education" used in this thesis supports the view that the opportunities for learning offered by PSwDB are not limited to the requirements of the curriculum, and this research question enabled me to take a more holistic approach to the programme than previous evaluations had done. I asked six sub-questions which looked at how students spoke about Shakespeare before their theatre visit; how that theatre visit was framed for and to them by their teachers and how they framed it for themselves; how PSwDB was created to meet the students' perceived needs; how the students reacted to the theatre and the production during their visit; how they spoke about their theatre visit afterwards; and how their teachers reflected on the benefits of the project for their students.

Most students in this study commented that their only experiences of Shakespeare prior to this theatre visit were in the classroom. Their experiences in all four schools participating in this research were relatively similar, with lessons in Year 9 focusing on written assessments in preparation for GCSE examinations in Year 11. The similarity of these students' experiences

suggests that they may be indicative of many other secondary school students' experiences of Shakespeare more broadly. The range of plays studied remains relatively small, with the most common classroom activities being reading aloud in class and the written analysis of texts; filmed versions are often used to aid understanding of the plot. Very few students discuss Shakespeare outside school, and, prior to seeing the PSwDB production, few saw any relevance in the plays to their own lives. What is compelling is the number of young people who enjoy studying Shakespeare, who find the plays interesting and who relish the challenge of the language, in contrast with previous assumptions. However, the majority of students rely heavily on their teachers to scaffold their learning in what I have called a cycle of dependence, where the assumption is that every word must be understood to enable them to write detailed responses to their assessment questions. The theatre visit therefore offers an important addition to more usual ways of studying Shakespeare.

The framing of the theatre visit by teachers is more variable between the schools in this study. Only one school, Henslowe Academy, was studying the play at the time of the theatre visit. Students at The Massinger School had previously studied the play, giving them some prior knowledge before their theatre visit. The teachers at Fletcher Comprehensive and Dekker High School, where students had not previously encountered the play in school, saw the trip as an enrichment opportunity. Regardless of whether the play was being taught in school or not, all the teachers I interviewed expressed a strong belief in PSwDB as an important opportunity for students to see Shakespeare performed live, without anyone being unable to attend for financial reasons. The students themselves, however, did not always understand the purpose of their theatre visit, particularly those who were not studying the play. Behaviour during the theatre production suggested that those students who had received less information about the theatre and the play before their visit may have found it more difficult to focus during the performance. An apparent assumption that the trip should relate directly to in-school studies of Shakespeare also seemed to cause confusion for some students. However, most students reacted strongly to the play as it unfolded in front of them, clearly listening to some of the words as well as responding to the visual elements of the production, and the majority of them enjoyed their theatre experience.

Reflecting on their theatre visit, students could clearly see how the contemporary elements of the production related to their own lives, in contrast with their prior expectations, although for some these contemporary elements were 'not Shakespeare'. The theatre itself also had a strong effect on the students, and most students could find some benefit for their future studies of Shakespeare. For many the trip was also a social and cultural critical event, offering a social and

cultural experience that would not usually be available to them. The free ticket offer is crucial to this experience.

Teachers were able to see more long-term benefits for their students, having taken students to see PSwDB productions in previous years. The inclusive nature of the trip means teachers knew the experience could be referenced in subsequent lessons, in the knowledge that all students had attended, and they also spoke about the social and cultural benefits of visiting Shakespeare's Globe. They were less concerned about the reactions of those who would see other theatre performances than they were of those for whom PSwDB was an unusual or first experience of theatre. The TheatreSpace project demonstrated how important teachers are in introducing young people to theatre (O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton and Ewing, 2013), and my study echoes that finding.

8.3 Contribution to knowledge

This research has contributed to knowledge in three important ways: through the methodology chosen to undertake the research, through the data generated by that research, and through its findings.

8.3.1 Methodology

The methodology was designed to highlight students' voices, giving them a rare opportunity to speak about their experiences of studying Shakespeare, in their own words and in some detail, to an outsider who has no impact on their day-to-day classroom learning. Previous studies had focused predominantly on teachers' experiences of teaching Shakespeare (for example, Evans, 2017), or presented case studies of teachers researching within their own classes (for example, Wood, 2017).

The choice of participants was key to ensuring that a wide range of young people's voices were included in the findings: choosing schools that were taking a whole year group of students enabled those who would not normally choose to or be chosen to participate in either the school trip or the research to have their voices and opinions included. The use of a survey for data generation was also important in this regard and supports Denscombe's (2003, 2017) view that a survey is an approach rather than a method. Using the first questionnaire to choose interview participants also ensured that a range of voices were heard in the interviews.

The method used to carry out observations of the students in the theatre appears to be new. Through annotating a working script of the production with a different colour for each audience observed, it was relatively straightforward to compare how different student groups reacted at different points during the play, and provides a valuable contribution to the practice of audience

research. The practice of observing different audiences of one production across its production run, rather than observing one audience for each of a number of different productions (for example, Woods, 2012), also seems to be novel in this field.

8.3.2 Data generation

This research has generated a large body of data concerned with experiences of studying Shakespeare in the secondary school context. These data permit comparisons between students and between their school settings, giving opportunities for broader generalisations that may be valuable to other schools in England working within the requirements of the National Curriculum. The data also offer valuable insights into student audiences which is absent from much audience research. In addition, the inclusion of whole year groups in this research means that the data include comments from those who would not otherwise attend live theatre productions, a group that the TheatreSpace project acknowledged is difficult to access (Sinclair, 2014).

8.3.3 Findings

The findings demonstrate a much more varied and nuanced range of attitudes towards and experiences of Shakespeare than has previously been represented in the literature, even before these students had visited the theatre, and have important implications for teaching Shakespeare in schools. The students in this research contribute clear ideas about which activities are helpful and unhelpful when studying Shakespeare, demonstrating the value of researching with young people. Assessment requirements also seem to drive a cycle of dependence in the classroom, where English teachers are seen by their students as Shakespeare experts, who hold the key to learning correct understanding of plot and language; very few students appear to develop the confidence to approach Shakespeare without careful and detailed scaffolding from those teachers.

Prior to their theatre visit, very few students in this research said that they speak about Shakespeare outside lessons or that Shakespeare's plays have any relevance to their own lives. These two responses may be related: if students felt that the plots were relevant to them, they might be more inclined to speak about Shakespeare other than in relation to schoolwork. However, the contemporary PSwDB production clearly demonstrated to most students that there are elements within Shakespeare's plays to which they can relate. The treatment of Hero, and the use of mobile phones in this production to highlight the effects of lying, were easily recognised as contemporary societal problems, while the costumes, music and dancing showed that Shakespeare can be fun, with some students stating that their attitude towards Shakespeare had become more positive as a result of their theatre visit. The change in students'

perceptions of relatability suggests that thematic relevance of the plays to contemporary society is not often being included in school learning. In addition, it demonstrates that participating in a theatre visit can have a profound effect on a student's personal connection with the text being studied in class.

The visit to Shakespeare's Globe has also offered these students a social and cultural critical event. The design of PSwDB, with its free ticket offer and timed to fit in with the school day, enabled the four schools in this research to make the trip compulsory for their Year 9 students. This inclusivity is socially important: the journey to the theatre, the experience of being in the audience, and the journey home again with its post-show discussions, are all important social elements of the trip that add value for the students who attend. Culturally, students have travelled to Central London and have visited an iconic theatre building, both of which are experiences in which most would not otherwise have participated; some had never visited a theatre before this school trip, and most had only seen a Shakespeare play via the medium of film. PSwDB has therefore offered many of these students new life experiences outside of their usual social and cultural contexts. The London Borough of Newham's Every Child A Theatre Goer (ECATG) scheme, which participates in PSwDB, also demonstrates how local government policy can also enable young people to access cultural events and institutions.

Teachers play a crucial role in students' experiences of Shakespeare. However, much of what happens in the Shakespeare classroom appears to be driven by a combination of school budget and assessment criteria. Working within the boundaries set by national education policy, student independence and the contemporary relevance of Shakespeare's plays appear to be squeezed out by a focus on examinations, leading to a narrow view of what 'Shakespeare' is for many students. PSwDB disrupts the routine of classroom study and demonstrates that Shakespeare can be made accessible, relevant and enjoyable for the students in the audience.

8.4 Value to practitioners and policy makers

This research is of value to practitioners and policy makers in several ways, aligned with the four areas discussed in Chapter 7: the cycle of dependence, the theatre visit as a critical event in teaching and learning, the theatre visit as a social and cultural event, and what "Shakespeare" is for young people.

8.4.1 The cycle of dependence in the Shakespeare classroom.

The idea that the study of Shakespeare is examination-focused is not a new one; it was recognised by Coles (2009) in relation to the compulsory Year 9 Shakespeare SAT. The abolition of Year 9 SATs should have removed teaching to the test from Key Stage 3, but this research demonstrates how some schools are starting Key Stage 4 teaching in Year 9, effectively resulting

in diminishment of Key Stage 3 in favour of a three-year Key Stage 4. Students are therefore focused on examination achievement at an early stage in their secondary school career. This closes down opportunities for exploration of texts and the development of interpretative skills. The use of DVDs often seems to perpetuate the idea that there is a single, correct interpretation of a play. In addition, classroom activities that do not work towards an understanding of the text that will benefit examination performance are frequently dismissed as irrelevant by students, even if some find them enjoyable.

The findings therefore suggest two areas for consideration by practitioners. Firstly, there generally appears to need to be more explicit teaching of exploratory and interpretative skills that enable students to develop their own understandings of what the plays mean. This will enable them to build the confidence to offer varied and competing interpretations validated by evidence from the text, without waiting for their teacher to offer a "correct" interpretation. This in turn relies on teachers having the confidence to accept such varied and competing interpretations without closing them down. Judicious use of extracts from multiple DVD versions could support this teaching.

Secondly, but linked to the idea of developing varied interpretations, teachers explicitly need to validate their choices of lesson activity, explaining the purpose and intended learning outcome of each activity, particularly where these are less usual or may be seen as wasting time, such as drama activities. Students who are confident that their own explorations will be accepted, and who understand why they are doing a particular activity and what the expected outcome could be, are less likely to feel the confusion and reluctance that many students in this research expressed at participating in some lessons. These two considerations should then result in a greater number of students who understand that there are a range of interpretations available to them, which can be discovered and explored through a range of focused activities that do not always have to be explicitly focused on examination performance.

This idea of opening up the plays to multiple interpretations through exploratory activities depends upon the Shakespeare teacher's own knowledge of a range of lesson activities as well as knowledge of the plays themselves. It may also depend on the ethos and practices of the school and/or department in which the teacher works. Initial teacher training providers should therefore take some responsibility for ensuring that teachers have some knowledge and experience of different approaches to teaching Shakespeare, for example in line with Gibson's suggestions (see section 2.4.1), as part of their training. Teresa Cremin and Kerry Chappell (2018) suggest that training needs to be provided for both new and experienced teachers, so that they can confidently develop creative pedagogical practices and the ability to assess the ensuing

outcomes. This training should including how to create safe spaces for the exploration of ideas without fear of being wrong. Cremin and Chappell (2018) also note that creative thinking is going to be assessed as part of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests, further highlighting the importance of the creative pedagogies that were promoted for the teaching of Shakespeare during the 20th century (Irish, 2008).

8.4.2 The theatre visit as a critical event in teaching and learning

PSwDB is designed to ensure that all state secondary schools in London and Birmingham can access a live performance of a Shakespeare play for whole year groups of students, without cost (although Birmingham schools do have to pay for travel). It is clear from the numbers who apply for tickets to PSwDB productions that there are many schools who do not take advantage of this opportunity for their students. Why this should be is unknown and offers room for further research (see section 8.5 below). Of those that do apply for tickets, not all take whole year groups to see the production, reducing the possibility of using the visit in subsequent lessons, one of the important aspects of the trip for the teachers who participated in this research. For an event to be a critical event in teaching and learning, it needs to be directly related to the curriculum, which suggests that all students need to be included.

Although the play performed for the PSwDB production may not be one that is being studied by students at the time, it is clear that the teachers participating in this research see the production as part of the ongoing teaching of Shakespeare throughout secondary school, referring to it in lessons that occur sometimes two years later. This suggests that practitioners and policy makers need to take a more holistic view towards the teaching of Shakespeare in Key Stages 3 and 4, looking at how theatre can enhance the study of Shakespeare regardless of the play being studied at the time. The theatre visit could also be referenced by teachers of other subjects, affecting learning more broadly across the curriculum. In addition, comparisons between plays can be made to enhance the theatre experience by relating the play seen live to plays that the students already know. Anne, Head of English at the Massinger School, told me that teachers in her department were making just such comparisons as they prepared their students for the theatre visit (see section 4.5). The liveness and interactive nature of the PSwDB production were key elements that supported students' understanding of *Much Ado About Nothing* and enhanced their enjoyment of Shakespeare more generally, elements that cannot be replicated by watching a filmed production in the classroom. An opportunity to see a (any) Shakespeare play performed live should therefore not be missed just because it is a production of a play that the students do not know, are not studying, or are not likely to study.

8.4.3 The theatre visit as a social and cultural critical event

Leading on from the idea of the theatre visit as a critical event in teaching and learning is the concept of the theatre visit as a social and cultural critical event. This suggests that the theatre visit is a critical event which adds to students' social and cultural experiences of the world. This needs to be considered carefully by practitioners and policy makers when planning opportunities for students to participate in school trips to support their learning.

The concept of a social and cultural critical event is explored in some detail in Chapter 7 (see section 7.4). It suggests that focusing on the curriculum ignores many of the benefits of school trips for students. By placing the student at the centre of the trip, in place of the curriculum, it is possible to see a much wider range of benefits, experiences and learning opportunities for participants than solely curricular ones. The social aspect of PSwDB was very important for many students involved in this research, supporting Larsen and Jenssen's (2004) findings that the peer group is as important as the curricular purpose of a trip.

There does not appear to have been research into the cultural benefits of school visits. Culture in this thesis had referred to the daily practices of a group of people, in line with Rogoff (2003). However, Shakespeare is also regarded as high culture, an art form the knowledge of which demonstrates that a person is highly educated. The cultural benefits of a project like PSwDB are therefore twofold: students participate in an event that is not part of their normal daily cultural practices, and they visit an iconic cultural site to see an production of a play by a highly esteemed playwright, deemed to be the most important English writer (see section 1.2).

For a trip to be *designed* as a social and cultural critical event the experience needs to be valued in its entirety, rather than focusing on one or two of its constituent elements. This means that where practitioners and policy makers have favoured a focus on the curricular benefits of a visit, which in PSwDB are combined with financial benefits to ensure that the opportunity is as inclusive as possible, more attention needs to be paid to the social and cultural benefits that come from considering elements such as the journey, the venue, the social group and any artefacts offered as part of the experience. A trip to Shakespeare's Globe possibly makes it easier to see the social and cultural benefits than might be evident in other venues, as a result of its iconic structure and internal arrangement of space, but nevertheless these are important elements for any trip when thinking of the learning opportunities for young people.

8.4.4 What "Shakespeare" is for young people

The findings of this research suggest that, for the majority of young people, Shakespeare is "old", "posh", "difficult" and irrelevant to their lives. It was not always clear where the students'

expectations of Shakespeare in performance had come from, although the 'old' description often suggested that they saw Shakespeare as a historical figure, an idea supported by their difficulties with the language of the plays. For many, this view rendered Shakespeare 'boring' and only a few commented that they enjoyed the challenge of studying something 'difficult' and felt proud when they had achieved success (see section 4.2).

These attitudes present a considerable challenge for practitioners and policy makers. The idea of Shakespeare as "old" is not helped by examination assessment criteria that demand an understanding of the "contexts in which [texts] were written", making the study of Shakespeare the study of History (see section 1.2). One suggestion is that this could be adapted to include the contexts of production *and* of reception. However, it is unlikely that the assessment objectives will be changed in the near future. Another suggestion is that schools in England could move away from the three-year Key Stage 4 model of teaching seen in some of the schools participating in this research, back to a three-year Key Stage 3. Teachers of Year 9 students would then have more time to engage in exploratory, creative practices when teaching Shakespeare, rather than focusing on producing GCSE-style essays as the main outcome from studying a play. Cremin and Chappell noted in their review that 'the performativity agenda dominates practice, potentially reducing time for more relational pedagogies' (2018, p.26). Restricting this 'performativity agenda' to older year groups would give more time to develop students' confidence and independence as learners.

Additionally, the suggestions for breaking the cycle of dependence in section 1.4.1 above would be helpful in altering students' perceptions of Shakespeare, and productions such as PSwDB make clear that the plays can be interpreted to speak to a contemporary audience. It was clear from the theatre observations that many students could follow the plot as it was performed, often demonstrating that they were understanding the language as well as the story. Linguist David Crystal (2008) comments that there is plenty of Shakespeare's language that is easy to understand, and even where some is more complex, within an entire speech or scene there is usually an explanation in simpler terms. This suggests that focusing on the words that can be understood rather than on translating those that are more difficult would benefit students' confidence too.

8.4.5 Summary of value to practitioners and policy makers

Practitioners, for the most part teachers of Shakespeare, aim to help students to develop an understanding of Shakespeare's plays appropriate for achieving well in high stakes written examinations. For the majority of students in this research, all of whom were in Year 9, this involves reading the text while seated at desks and then writing an analytic essay to demonstrate

understanding. Students rely on their teachers for detailed support in understanding and interpreting the texts, in order to produce successful essays that they hope will lead directly to success in their examinations, in what I have called a cycle of dependence. This thesis recommends a move towards using creative pedagogies that develop independence and permit students to explore different interpretations of texts with the confidence that all responses will be valued, regardless of what those responses are. This approach will also meet the examination criterion for a personal response to the text (see section 1.2).

In addition, a theatre visit can be seen as a critical event in teaching and learning within the teaching of Shakespeare and as a social and cultural critical event. The production seen does not have to be the play being studied by students, and teachers interviewed for this research demonstrated how links across plays can be made, referencing genres and characters. Curriculum learning is enhanced by immersion in Shakespeare's language and by the space of Shakespeare's Globe, and other opportunities for learning come from aspects of the visit such as the journey to the venue and the sharing of the experience with peers. The liveness of theatre is in direct contrast to the passivity of watching a film in school, according to some students. Practitioners should therefore actively seek out opportunities such as PSwDB for their students, and theatres should consider how such opportunities can be offered. This is particularly important for those students for whom seeing live theatre is not a normal part of their social and cultural practices, and who would therefore not normally choose to participate in a theatre visit.

The support from Deutsche Bank is key in enabling all student to access the project, and collaboration between theatres and their sponsors is important in maintaining this policy of open access to cultural spaces and events. PSwDB therefore also offers a model for other educational organisations aiming to create opportunities for social, cultural and curricular learning that are fully inclusive.

8.5 Areas for further research

PSwDB has a wide reach and there are many different ways in which this research could have been designed and carried out, and other areas that would benefit from further research. These areas focus on differing experiences of the theatre visit, and on why some schools and/or teachers and/or students do not choose to take up this opportunity. They also consider the longitudinal benefits of the theatre visit for the students regarding their in-school learning about Shakespeare, their longer-term appreciation of his plays, and their attitudes towards theatre as a form of entertainment in the future. This further research would provide more breadth and/or more depth to the findings presented in this thesis, enabling Globe Education to ensure that

PSwDB can be as inclusive and as valuable as possible for all students studying Shakespeare's plays.

8.5.1 The social experience

This study has focused on students from four London state secondary schools where the whole cohort of Year 9 students had the opportunity to attend the 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing* as part of their English curriculum. However, some schools did not take whole cohorts to the theatre, changing the dynamic of the social experience and reducing the potential for referring to the visit in subsequent lessons, and/or took other year groups, with correspondingly more or less experience of studying Shakespeare than the participants of this research. As PSwDB is designed predominantly for Key Stage 3 students, many would have been younger with less prior knowledge. The pilot study also demonstrated that different school subject areas and different age groups would reflect on PSwDB in very different ways. These different cohorts would have provided different insights into the theatre experience, and future research could add valuable data from across different age ranges. In particular a comparison of the experience of small groups with that of much larger groups of students would demonstrate how important the social aspect of a theatre visit is for these young people.

8.5.2 The theatre experience

All four schools in this research were allocated seats within the theatre, three in the lower gallery and one in the upper gallery. However, other schools sat in the middle gallery or stood in the yard for their performances. Students in the yard, standing close to the stage and often in touching distance of the actors during performances, would have had a very different experience of Shakespeare's Globe and of the performance; these students are also under the roof opening and therefore are directly affected by inclement weather. Position in the theatre is therefore an important aspect of the whole theatre experience, and further research focusing on different areas of the theatre would be valuable, particularly the experiences of those standing in the yard.

8.5.3 Financial considerations

Schools in Birmingham have a much greater investment of time and money in PSwDB for travel to and from the theatre than schools in London, for whom Transport for London offers free travel. Other schools that do not qualify for the free theatre ticket offer pay to see the production. Research with these schools would offer an alternative perspective on the value of PSwDB and on whether these schools manage their budgets to make the visit inclusive. If schools are not able to bring whole cohorts of students to Shakespeare's Globe as a result of these costs,

it would be interesting to see the effect of that on students' subsequent learning and on the social experience, as mentioned above.

8.5.4 Diversity and equality

Schools were also chosen from four different boroughs across London, to demonstrate the diversity of contexts of schools who participate in PSwDB (see Table 4). However, this study has not sought to differentiate responses by the cultural or ethnic background or by the gender of the participants, nor has it looked at the responses of disabled audience members.

The cast of this production of *Much Ado About Nothing* was ethnically diverse and included the change of male characters to female characters, and research into these areas could highlight some important ideas about representation on stage. Some students did mention the ethnicity of cast members but this was not a focus of inquiry. There was a question on questionnaire 2 about the change from Don John to Donna Joan, but this focused on altering Shakespeare's original play rather than on gender representation on stage. Further research could therefore look at how students respond to casting decisions in more detail.

In addition, this research has focused on students in mainstream schools and has not considered how students with special educational needs might respond to PSwDB. The inclusion of British Sign Language signed performances and relaxed performances ensure that a range of access preferences are catered for as part of PSwDB. Further research in schools for students with special needs and with students with special needs in mainstream schools would be valuable in understanding how these young people experience theatre and Shakespeare, and would provide important data for arts organisations aiming to make their events fully inclusive.

Accessibility and inclusivity are important qualities of PSwDB, and considerations of diversity and equality are an important part of making the productions as accessible and inclusive as possible. However, these qualities do not just refer to physical access to the theatre but also to representation on stage. Questions to be asked need to address accessing and understanding the performance itself as well as the physical ability to be an audience member. Research into this area would provide valuable data from participants with additional needs to ensure that theatre can be truly inclusive.

8.5.5 Understanding non-participation

Approximately three fifths of London state secondary schools do not obtain tickets to the production[26]. Approximately 15 of these schools, according to Globe Education, wanted tickets but could not be accommodated because of a lack of availability. However, the remainder do not apply for tickets. Further important data could therefore be generated by approaching schools who do not participate in PSwDB, to understand why they do not apply for tickets, particularly when programmes like PSwDB are designed to support a compulsory curriculum subject and are cost-free. Further research could discover whether non-participation is a result of a failure of communication meaning that teachers do not know about the project; whole school priorities that mean a visit to Shakespeare's Globe is classed as unnecessary or unimportant; organisational difficulties; or some other reason. This would enable Shakespeare's Globe to respond appropriately, so that even more students could benefit from PSwDB in future.

8.5.6 Links with in-school teaching

PSwDB is designed to support the school curriculum. The links between the theatre visit and subsequent teaching and learning have not been established in this study and would provide a valuable focus for further research, in particular a longitudinal study observing how the trip is integrated into lessons as a critical event in teaching and learning. Lesson observations would also show whether the microsite and theatre programme are being used in lessons, and if so, how. Observations could also establish whether the activities introduced in the continuing professional development (CPD) sessions are being used by teachers in practice. Asking students for their memories of and reflections on their theatre visit over time would offer insights into the more long-term benefits of the programme that in this study are only anecdotally reported by teachers. The students would be able to comment on how the theatre visit has been used for reflection when studying other Shakespeare plays or even those of his contemporaries who might have worked in a similar theatre space. They could also be asked about subsequent theatre experiences and whether the PSwDB theatre visit had influenced their attitudes towards theatre as a medium of entertainment in any way. This would provide empirical evidence to support or counter the anecdotal evidence of teachers included in the current study and would further support the importance of theatre as a critical event in teaching and learning and as a social and cultural critical event.

[26] Statistics provided by the Department for Education show that in the 2019 census there were 513 state secondary schools in London (Department for Education, 2019).

8.6 Summary

The students who participated in this research were keen to express their views about Shakespeare, whatever those views were. Many of them would not have chosen to see a Shakespeare play performed live, given the choice, but the data show that this theatre visit was an important social, cultural and educational experience for them, introducing them to an iconic London landmark and changing their views about what "Shakespeare" is. Most enjoyed their theatre visit, in spite of some extremely cold weather, with the free tickets ensuring that the trip was inclusive, reaching all students regardless of ability to pay. Their reflections on the production show the importance of seeing a play performed and of understanding that any performance is an interpretation of the written text rather than a definitive version. The contemporary elements of the production also challenged opinions about Shakespeare's lack of relevance to young people

The students I interviewed seemed to enjoy being part of this research process. Their voices offer valuable insights into the teaching and learning of Shakespeare and the value of theatre as part of that learning. Their comments offer suggestions for improving their classroom experiences so that they can develop the skills and confidence to approach Shakespeare independently. PSwDB demonstrates that this is possible, breaking the cycle of dependence found in the classroom through its accessibility and inclusive design. PSwDB therefore offers an important and influential addition to young people's encounters with Shakespeare.

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10 APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDIX I: STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

Pre-school / Primary school	Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)	Pre-school	Age 3-4 years[27]
Primary school		Reception Class	Age 4-5 years
	Key Stage 1	Year 1	Age 5-6 years
		Year 2	Age 6-7 years
	Key Stage 2	Year 3	Age 7-8 years
		Year 4	Age 8-9 years
		Year 5	Age 9-10 years
		Year 6	Age 10-11 years
Secondary School	Key Stage 3	Year 7	Age 11-12 years
		Year 8	Age 12-13 years
		Year 9[28]	Age 13-14 years
	Key Stage 4	Year 10	Age 14-15 years
		Year 11	Age 15-16 years
	Key Stage 5	Year 12	Age 16-17 years
		Year 13	Age 17-18 years

[27] Children progress through the school system according to their calendar age on 1st September each year. The school year is divided into three terms: the autumn term, from September to December; the spring term, from January to March; the summer term, from April to July. The legal age for entering formal schooling is the term after the 5th birthday, although most children begin schooling in the September after their 4th birthday (GOV.UK, n.d.(a)). All children must stay in some recognised form of education or training, such as an apprenticeship, until their 18th birthday (GOV.UK, n.d.(b)).

[28] Some schools, including at least two of the four that participated in this research, now treat Year 9 as the first year of a three-year Key Stage 4, in preparation for GCSE examinations.

10.2 APPENDIX II: HUMAN RESOURCES AND ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The Open University

From	Dr Louise Westmarland Chair, The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee
Email	louise.westmarland@open.ac.uk
Extension	01908 652462
To	Catherine Baldwin, WELS
Subject	'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank': how are London state secondary schools using the CPD, workshops and digital resources provided by Shakespeare's Globe, and how is this use reflected in the students' written work?
HREC Ref	HREC 2016 2439 Baldwin
AMS ref	
Submitted	09/12/16
Decision date	24/01/17

Memorandum

This memorandum is to confirm that the research protocol for the above-named research project, as submitted for ethics review, has been given favourable opinion by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Please note the following:

1. You are responsible for notifying the HREC immediately of any information received by you, or of which you become aware which would cast doubt on, or alter, any information contained in the original application, or a later amendment which would raise questions about the safety and/or continued conduct of the research.

2. It is essential that any proposed amendments to the research are sent to the HREC for review, so they can be recorded and a favourable opinion given prior to the any changes being implemented (except only in cases of emergency when the welfare of the participant or researcher is may be effected).

3. You are authorised to present this memorandum to outside bodies such as NHS Research Ethics Committees in support of any application for future research clearance. Also, where there is an external ethics review, a copy of the application and outcome should be sent to the HREC.

4. OU research ethics review procedures are fully compliant with the majority of grant awarding bodies and their frameworks for research ethics.

5. At the conclusion of your project, by the date stated in your application, you are required to provide the Committee with a final report to reflect how the project has progressed, and importantly whether any ethics issues arose and how they were dealt with. A copy of the final report template can be found on the research ethics website - http://www.open.ac.uk/research/ethics/human-research/human-research-ethics-full-review-process-and-proforma#final report.

Kind regards,
Dr Louise Westmarland
Chair OU HREC http://www.open.ac.uk/research/ethics/

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

The Open University

From	Dr Louise Westmarland The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee
Email	louise.westmarland@open.ac.uk
Extension	(6) 52462

To	Catherine Baldwin, WELS
Project title	An exploratory study of student responses to *Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank* as a curriculum intervention
HREC ref	HREC/2016/2439/Baldwin/1
AMS ref	

Memorandum

Date application submitted: 11/10/2017
Date of HREC response: 20/10/2017

This memorandum is to confirm that the amendment to the above-named research project,(formerly 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank': how are London state secondary schools using CPD, workshops and digital resources provided by Shakespeare's Globe, and how is this use reflected in the students' written work?) as submitted to the OU HREC has been given a favourable opinion by Chair's action.

Please note the following:

1. You are responsible for notifying the HREC immediately of any information received by you, or of which you become aware which would cast doubt on, or alter, any information contained in the original application, or a later amendment which would raise questions about the safety and/or continued conduct of the research.

2. It is essential that any proposed amendments to the research are sent to the HREC for review, so they can be recorded and a favourable opinion given prior to any changes being implemented (except only in cases of emergency when the welfare of the participant or researcher is or may be effected).

3. Please include your HREC reference number in any documents or correspondence, also any publicity seeking participants or advertising your research, so it is clear that it has been reviewed by HREC and adheres to OU ethics review processes.

4. You are authorised to present this memorandum to outside bodies such as NHS Research Ethics Committees in support of any application for future research clearance. Also, where there is an external ethics review, a copy of the application and outcome should be sent to the HREC.

5. OU research ethics review procedures are fully compliant with the majority of grant awarding bodies and where they exist, their frameworks for research ethics.

6. At the end of your project, you are required to assess your research for ethics related issues and/or major changes. Where these have occurred you will need to provide the Committee with a HREC final report to reflect how these were dealt with using the final report template

10.3 APPENDIX III: CONSENT FORMS

10.3.1 Appendix III.i Letter to Head Teacher

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
3rd Floor, Stuart Hall Building
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
United Kingdom
MK7 6AA
Tel +44 (0) 1908 655272
Cathy.Baldwin@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk

DATE

School Address 1

School Address 2

School Address 3

Dear ***Head Teacher Name***,

My name is Cathy Baldwin and I am a full time PhD research student at the Open University, working in association with Shakespeare's Globe. I am carrying out research into schools' participation in 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'. The research sets out to gain insight into what students think of studying Shakespeare, and how they respond to the production of *Much Ado About Nothing* that is the 2018 production for 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'.

Globe Education has identified your school as a participant in 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' this year, organised by ***Teacher Name.*** I am therefore writing to ask if you would participate in my study. I am focusing on Key Stage 3 students and hope that this will not be too intrusive as it does not involve exam classes. In addition research activities will dovetail into the Globe Education programme and I will liaise with ***Teacher name*** to minimise any disruption to the students' school work.

Participation will mean students completing questionnaires before and after attending the theatre production, and about eight students taking part in paired interviews with me. I would also like to observe the in-school workshop from Globe Education, if provided, and the students' reactions during the performance at Shakespeare's Globe.

If you are happy for your school to participate in my research, I will also ask for permission from ***Teacher Name,*** parents/guardians for their children's participation, and from the students themselves. All participants will have the opportunity to withdraw their data at any time up to two months after the interviews, after which time it will have been anonymised and collated. If they withdraw their data it will be destroyed.

All data collected will be stored securely on the Open University server and only myself and my supervisors named below will have direct access to this data. Neither your school nor any student or member of staff who participates will be identified in any distribution of the results of my research.

The focus of the research is upon the effectiveness of the 'Playing Shakespeare' programme and the student experience of it rather than any sort of evaluation of the school's work. Your school, its staff and

its students are not being judged in any way. Involvement is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw permission at any time during the project.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this research with you further. Please contact either myself or my supervisors, Regine Hampel of the Open University, Regine.Hampel@open.ac.uk, and Georghia Ellinas of Shakespeare's Globe, Georghia.E@shakespearesglobe.com, for further information or if you have any questions.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Baldwin

Tel: 01908 655272

Email: cathy.baldwin@open.ac.uk

10.3.2 Appendix III.ii Parent Consent Letter

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
3rd Floor, Stuart Hall Building
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
United Kingdom
MK7 6AA
Tel +44 (0) 1908 652272
Cathy.Baldwin@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk

DATE

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am a PhD student researching how students respond to Shakespeare's Globe's programme 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank.' As part of this research, I am seeking permission to interview some students to ask them about their experience of visiting Shakespeare's Globe, and their opinions on studying Shakespeare in school.

Your Head Teacher has given permission in principle for me to interview students in the school and I would now like your permission to interview your son/daughter. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent at any time up to two months after the interview; in this case all data relating to your son/daughter will be removed from the study. Your son/daughter will also be asked to give consent to his/her participation.

There will be two interviews, each one taking up to an hour. They will take place in school, in a group of two, three or four students together. Your son/daughter will be asked questions about visiting Shakespeare's Globe and about their lessons in school. They will also be asked about anything that they don't like in relation to their study of Shakespeare. They will have the option at any time to withdraw from the interview or to refuse to answer any question I put to them. The students are not being judged in any way. Interviews will be recorded for the purposes of accuracy, and recordings will be stored securely at the Open University. You may request a transcript of the recording.

All data concerning the school and the students will be anonymised so that they cannot be traced. Once anonymised, it will not be possible to remove data from the study. The results of my research will be written up as part of my PhD thesis, and may be published in journals and presented at conferences. The future audience for my research also includes the Education Department at Shakespeare's Globe, and Deutsche Bank, who fund the 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' programme.

If you agree to your son/daughter being interviewed for the purposes of my research, please initial each box on the attached consent form, sign and date at the bottom and return to me via your school as soon as possible. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via my contact details below. Alternatively, please contact Regine Hampel at the Open University, Regine.Hampel@open.ac.uk, or Georghia Ellinas, Head of Learning at Shakespeare's Globe, Georghia.E@shakespearesglobe.com, for further information.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Baldwin
Tel: 01908 652272
Email: cathy.baldwin@open.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Research into student responses to 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'.

I agree / I do not agree to my son/daughter taking part in this research (please delete as appropriate)

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understood the letter dated ***DATE*** for research into 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

I understand that my son/daughter's participation is entirely voluntary and that I and/or they are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any consequences for either me or them. ☐

I have been informed that the interview will be recorded and the recording will be stored securely at the Open University. I give my consent for this recording to be made. ☐

I understand that all information regarding my son/daughter and the school will be treated as confidential and will be anonymised. ☐

I agree to the use of anonymised direct quotes from my son/daughter's interview in publications and presentations arising from this study. ☐

_____

Name of student

_____	_____	_____
Name of parent/guardian	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of researcher	Date	Signature

10.3.3 Appendix III.iii Student Consent Letter

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
3rd Floor, Stuart Hall Building
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
United Kingdom
MK7 6AA
Tel +44 (0) 1908 652272
Cathy.Baldwin@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk

19th February 2018

Dear Student,

My name is Cathy Baldwin and I am researching how students speak about their experiences of studying Shakespeare, and about attending the production of *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare's Globe. As part of this research, I want to interview some students to ask them their opinions about Shakespeare as part of the curriculum, and whether seeing the production at Shakespeare's Globe has been a positive experience for them. Your Head Teacher and your parent/guardian have given permission for you to take part in this research.

Participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent at any time before 30th April 2018; in this case everything you tell me will be deleted from the study. Interviews will be recorded for the purposes of accuracy, and recordings will be stored securely at the Open University. You may request a transcript of your interview.

The interview will take no more than an hour and you are not being judged in any way. Anything you tell me is confidential and will be anonymised so that it cannot be traced. If you tell me anything that I need to pass on to someone else, I will tell you first what I am going to do.

The results of my research will be written up as part of my PhD thesis, and may be published in journals and presented at conferences. The future audience for my research also includes the Education Department at Shakespeare's Globe, and Deutsche Bank, who fund the *Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank* programme.

If you agree to being interviewed for the purposes of my research, please initial each box on the attached consent form, sign and date at the bottom. You can keep a copy of this information and the consent form so that you know what you have agreed to.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Baldwin
Tel: 01908 652272
Email: cathy.baldwin@open.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Research into the use of 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' resources in London state secondary schools.

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understood the letter dated 19th February 2018 for research into 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any consequences. ☐

I have been informed that the interview will be recorded and the recording will be stored securely at the Open University. I give my consent for this recording to be made. ☐

I understand that all information regarding me and the school will be treated as confidential and will be anonymised. ☐

I agree to the use of anonymised direct quotes from my interview in publications and presentations arising from this study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of student	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of researcher	Date	Signature

10.3.4 Appendix III.iv Teacher Consent Letter

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
3rd Floor, Stuart Hall Building
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
United Kingdom
MK7 6AA

Tel +44 (0) 1908 652272
Cathy.Baldwin@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk

6th March 2018

Dear ,

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research into students' experiences of visiting Shakespeare's Globe for the 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent at any time during the interview or up to two months afterwards; in this case everything you tell me will be deleted from the study.

The interview should take about 40 minutes, and you are not being judged in any way. Anything you tell me is confidential and will be anonymised so that it cannot be traced. Interviews will be recorded for the purposes of accuracy, and recordings will be stored securely at the Open University. You may request a transcript of your interview.

The results of my research will be written up as part of my PhD thesis, and may be published in journals and presented at conferences. The future audience for my research also includes the Education Department at Shakespeare's Globe, and Deutsche Bank, who fund the 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' programme.

If you agree to being interviewed for the purposes of my research, please initial each box on the attached consent form, sign and date at the bottom. You can keep a copy of this information and the consent form so that you know what you have agreed to.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Baldwin
Tel: 01908 652272
Email: cathy.baldwin@open.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Research into student responses to 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'.

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understood the letter dated 6th March 2018 for research into 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any consequences. ☐

I have been informed that the interview will be recorded and the recording will be stored securely at the Open University. I give my consent for this recording to be made. ☐

I understand that all information regarding me and the school will be treated as confidential and will be anonymised. ☐

I agree to the use of anonymised direct quotes from my interview in publications and presentations arising from this study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Teacher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

10.3.5 Appendix III.v Shakespeare's Globe Staff and Volunteers Consent Letter

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
3rd Floor, Stuart Hall Building
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
United Kingdom
MK7 6AA
Tel +44 (0) 1908 655272
Cathy.Baldwin@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk

1st November 2017

Staff name
Shakespeare's Globe
21 New Globe Walk
Bankside
London
SE1 9DT

Dear ***Name***,

Thank you for agreeing to me recording your discussion on Monday 6th November as part of my research into 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank.'

Please complete the consent form attached to confirm that you are in agreement with how your contributions may be used as a professional working at Shakespeare's Globe. Participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right at any time to rescind your consent and to ask for your contributions to be removed from my research. You may also see a transcript of the discussion if you wish. Please confirm whether or not you are in agreement with your name being used in connection with your comments.

My research may be published in academic papers and at conferences, and your contribution will form part of my PhD thesis which I expect to complete by October 2019.

Thank you once again for agreeing to contribute to my research.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Baldwin

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies,
The Open University
Tel: 01908 655272
Email: cathy.baldwin@open.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

Research into student responses to 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank' as a curriculum intervention in London state secondary schools.

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understood the letter dated 1st November 2017 for research into 'Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank'. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, to ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any consequences. ☐

I have been informed that the discussion will be recorded and the recording will be stored securely at the Open University. I give my consent for this recording to be made. ☐

I **do / do not** give permission for my name to be used in connection with my data as a theatre / education professional working in association with Shakespeare's Globe. If I do not give permission for my name to be used, I understand that all my data relating to the discussion will be anonymised. ☐

I agree to the use of direct quotes from the discussion in publications and presentations arising from this study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of researcher	Date	Signature

10.4 APPENDIX IV: DATA GENERATION TOOLS

10.4.1 Appendix IV.i Student Questionnaire 1 (pre-theatre visit questionnaire)

Dear student,

As part of my research into *Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank*, your teacher has agreed to you answering a few questions about your experiences of studying Shakespeare. There are no wrong or right answers so please answer honestly based on how you feel.

Please could I have your name and school in case I would like to ask you some questions about your responses later on? I will not identify you in anything I say or write about this project. Thank you.

Your name: _____

Your school: _____

Your age: _____ Your class: _____

1. What do you think and/or feel when you hear the word 'Shakespeare'? Why?

2. What Shakespeare plays have you studied in school?

3. What do you usually do in lessons when you study Shakespeare? Please tick all that apply:

Read from the text:	☐	Discuss in small groups:	☐	Draw pictures:	☐
Write about the play:	☐	Discuss as a class:	☐	Create models:	☐
Listen to the teacher:	☐	Copy from the board:	☐	Watch a DVD:	☐
Act out parts of the play:	☐	Other: (Please state)		_____	

4. Which classroom activities do or do not help you to study Shakespeare's plays and why?

Help:

Don't help:

Please turn over

5. Do you ever talk about Shakespeare when you are not in lessons? If so, to whom and why?

6. Have you ever seen a Shakespeare play performed? If so, what did you see and where? (Include school productions and film/TV versions)

7. Do you have any expectations for how Shakespeare should be performed? Consider things like costumes, scenery, acting style, accents.

8. Have you ever been to the theatre before? (Circle one answer) Yes No

9. Have you ever been to Shakespeare's Globe before? (Circle one answer) Yes No

10. If you answered 'yes' to question 9, why did you go and with whom? (for example: school, parents)

11. Is there anything you have noticed in the Shakespeare plays you have studied that you can relate to your own life or to the life of someone you know? If so, what?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

10.4.2 Appendix IV.ii Student Interview Schedule 1

1. What happens in a normal English lesson when you are studying Shakespeare?
    a. How do you feel about that?
    b. clarify – is that what you are supposed to do or what you actually do?
2. Vignette – areas for comment = unknown Shakespeare play, type of writing, cover teacher.
3. Photo elicitation – areas for comment = preferred type of classroom – for work, for enjoyment; preferred type of lesson (group/solo; active/passive)
4. Reference to questionnaires – ask for further explanation of interesting comments

A cover teacher arrives with a copy of a Shakespeare play you have not read before.

He tells you to open at a particular speech and then write an imaginative piece based on this speech.

What would you like about this activity and what would you dislike?

Appendix IV.ii.ii Photographs used with students in the pre-theatre visit interviews.

Figure 14: Photograph of a drama studio

Figure 15: Photograph of a classroom set up for working in groups
© James Anning (2018) – used with permission.

Figure 16: Photograph of a classroom set up with desks in rows
© James Anning (2018) – used with permission.

10.4.3 Appendix IV.iii Student Questionnaire 2 (post-theatre visit questionnaire)

Dear student,

As part of my research into *Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank*, I would now like to ask you a few questions about attending *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare's Globe. As before, there are no wrong or right answers, so please answer honestly based on how you feel.

Please could I have your name and school so that I can combine your answers here with the ones you gave to the first questionnaire? I will not identify you in anything I say or write about this project. Thank you.

Your name: _____

Your school: _____

1. What did you think of Shakespeare's Globe as a theatre building?

2. How well did you know *Much Ado About Nothing* before you saw the play performed at Shakespeare's Globe? Please tick one answer:
   a. I knew the play very well ☐
   b. I knew some of the story ☐
   c. I didn't really know much about it ☐
   d. I knew nothing about it ☐

3. Did it matter whether you knew the story beforehand or not? Why?

4. Overall, did you enjoy the performance? Why?

5. Shakespeare originally wrote Donna Joan as a man, Don John. What do you think of this being changed for this production?

6. What did you think about the use of mobile phones in this production?

Please turn over

7. Was Hero right to forgive Claudio and to marry him at the end of the play? Why?

8. What did you think of the music in this production?

9. Was this production what you expected for a Shakespeare play? Please explain your answer.

10. Do you think that this production of *Much Ado About Nothing* had any messages for young people in 2018? What were they?

11. Is there anything else you would like to comment on about this production?

12. Do you think visiting Shakespeare's Globe for this production will help you when you study Shakespeare in future? Why?

13. Is there a difference between watching a film version of a play and seeing it live at the theatre? Why?

14. Would you have gone on the trip if you had had to pay for your ticket? Why?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

10.4.4 Appendix IV.iv Student Interview Schedule 2

1. For Henslowe Academy only: What did you think of the workshop with the actor who came to your school?
    a. Did any activities stand out for you?
    b. Do you ever do those kind of activities in your normal English lessons?
    c. Did the workshop help you to understand the play when you went to the theatre?
2. Can you tell me what it was like to go to Shakespeare's Globe to see *Much Ado About Nothing*?
    a. What did you think of the theatre?
        i. How did the weather affect you?
        ii. What was it like being out of doors compared to an indoor theatre?
    b. What did you think of the production?
        i. Did you find it easy to follow the story?
        ii. Did you notice any of the language in this play?
        iii. Did anything particularly stand out for you?
3. Have you read the programme or gone on the website for the production?
    a. Where/with whom?
4. Did you talk about the play afterwards?
    a. Where/with whom?
    b. What did you talk about?
5. Have you thought about any of the themes in the play, for example ideas about what truth is or how men treat women?
    a. What kinds of things did you think about?
    b. Did you talk about this with anyone? Who? Why?
6. Do you think that seeing a Shakespeare play performed is essential to understanding it?
    a. Why?
    b. Do you think that your visit to Shakespeare's Globe was educational?
    c. Why? What does that mean?
    d. Do you think it will be helpful when you study Shakespeare for GCSE?
7. What did you think of the school taking your whole year group?
    a. Would it have been different if only a small group had gone? Why?
    b. What might have stopped you going?
    c. If you had had to pay for your ticket, would that have mattered to you?
    d. Would you go again?

10.4.5 Appendix IV.v Teacher Interview Schedule

Questions about participating in PSwDB:

1. Why did you decide to take the students to *PSwDB*?
    a. Was it important to take the whole year group? Why?
    b. What did you hope that the students would get out of it?
    c. Is it important that the tickets are free? Why?

Questions about this specific theatre visit:

2. How much did these students know about *Much Ado About Nothing* before the theatre visit?
    a. What preparation did they have in lessons before going to the performance?
3. Did the production lead to any interesting discussions that you were aware of?
4. Did you have any specific outcomes in mind as a result of attending the production, such as a spoken or written piece of work?
5. What were your expectations for these outcomes and did the students meet them?
6. To your knowledge, did any of the students produce any more informal texts, such as vlogs or on snapchat, as a result of attending the production?

Questions about the wider provision:

7. Did you take up the offer of the CPD? Why? Did you go alone or as a department? Have you used any activities you learned in your teaching?
8. Did you book the workshop for the students? Why/why not? What do you think they got out of it?
9. Have you used or referred to the microsite or printed programme in lessons?

Questions about the future:

10. Do you think that going to Shakespeare's Globe will have any long-term effect on the students? (Educationally/socially/culturally)
11. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the project or teaching Shakespeare more generally?

10.5 APPENDIX V: SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Questionnaire 1

Question	Fletcher Comprehensive	Henslowe Academy	The Massinger School	Dekker High School	Total
1	186	163	219	139	707
2	190	166	220	135	711
3	188	166	217	138	709
4	166	148	218	126	658
4a	165	144	218	122	649
4b	119	132	177	115	543
5	174	160	216	133	683
6	174	160	216	134	684
7	156	146	210	121	633
8	177	163	221	131	692
9	175	163	218	134	690
10	65	80	61	47	253
11	141	139	190	115	585

Questionnaire 2

Question	Fletcher Comprehensive	Henslowe Academy	The Massinger School	Dekker High School	Total
1	158	130	238	67	593
2	163	130	238	68	599
3	162	129	238	66	595
4	162	129	238	66	595
5	126	122	230	49	527
6	150	126	235	60	571
7	122	118	237	50	527
8	147	116	238	63	564
9	139	116	236	58	549
10	115	112	228	41	496
11	124	107	215	46	492
12	133	106	236	50	525
13	122	102	233	54	511
14	129	103	236	57	525

10.6 APPENDIX VI: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

10.6.1 Appendix VI.i Cast list for the 2018 PSwDB production of *Much Ado About Nothing*

Philip Correia	Claudio
Emilio Doorgasingh	Leonato
Tyler Fayose	Don Pedro
Charlyne Francis	Donna Joan / Constable
Aruhan Galieva	Hero
Fiona Hampton	Beatrice
Ben Mansfield	Benedick
Jordan Mifsud	Borachio / Messenger
Charlotte Mills	Dogberry / Pastor Francis
Rachel Winters	Margaret / Verges

10.6.2 Appendix VI.ii List of characters in the play[29]

THE SOLDIERS

DON PEDRO		*Prince of Aragon*
DON JOHN		*illegitimate brother to Don Pedro*
Signor BENEDICK		*a lord of Padua*
Signor CLAUDIO		*a lord of Florence*
BALTHASAR		*an attendant to Don Pedro*
CONRADE	)	*companions to Don John*
BORACHIO	)	
LORD		

THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE GOVERNOR OF MESSINA

LEONATO		*Governor of Messina*
ANTONIO		*brother to Leonato*
HERO		*daughter to Leonato*
BEATRICE		*niece to Leonato*
MARGARET	)	*waiting women to Hero*
URSULA	)	
BOY		

TOWNSPEOPLE OF MESSINA

FRIAR Francis		
DOGBERRY		*master constable*
VERGES		*a headborough*
Members of the WATCH		
George SEACOAL	)	*members of the Watch*
Hugh Oatcake	)	
Francis Seacoal, *a* SEXTON		

OTHERS

MESSENGERS

Attendants, Musicians

[29] List of characters according to Shakespeare (2006, p.146, ed. McEachern): this edition follows Rowe's edition of 1709 in listing characters by rank and gender.

10.6.3 Appendix VI.iii Synopsis of the play

Introduction

Much Ado About Nothing was first printed in quarto form in 1600, and circumstantial evidence such as it not being listed in the Stationer's Register on September 1598 but having 'Kemp' as a speech heading suggests that it was first performed between late 1598 and early 1599, after which time Kemp left the company (Mares, 2003). The play is regarded as one of Shakespeare's three 'great romantic comedies' of the late 1590s, along with *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* (Greenblatt, 1997), and it appears that it was a continually popular play up to the closing of the theatres in 1642 (Mares, 2003).

The main plot of *Much Ado About Nothing,* concerning Hero and Claudio, is believed to be based on Bandello's story of Timbreo and Fenecia, published as part of a collection of stories in Lucca in 1554, although the addition of a servant appearing in her mistress's clothes is believed to come from another story, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (Mares, 2003). The subsidiary plot of Beatrice and Benedick does not have an obvious source, although Shakespeare himself seems to have anticipated their verbal duelling and their deception during the gulling scenes in plays such as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Loves Labour's Lost* (Mares, 2003).

This synopsis is based on the New Cambridge Shakespeare updated edition of the play, and all line references are to this edition (Shakespeare, 2003). It is divided into five acts according to modern editorial practice, to permit comparison with the 2018 PSwDB production of the play detailed in Chapter 5, although the director did not use act divisions in his script, preferring to number each scene chronologically from 1 to 16. The quotations used in this synopsis were included in the PSwDB production. However, the cast and script were reduced in line with the financial and time limits for the project (see section 1.4).

Act 1

The play begins with the announcement to Leonato's household of the imminent arrival of Don Pedro, victorious after battling with his rebellious brother, Don John. The message receives mixed reactions from members of Leonato's family: Hero, Leonato's daughter, remembers one of Don Pedro's soldiers, Claudio, fondly, while Beatrice, Leonato's niece, is more scathing towards another, Benedick, whom she calls 'a stuffed man' (1.1.43). Leonato explains that 'there is a kind of merry war betwixt Signor Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them' (1.1.45-47). The women are accompanied by their servants, Ursula and Margaret.

Don Pedro arrives, accompanied by Claudio and Benedick, along with Don Pedro's brother, Don John, and two of Don John's supporters, Borachio and Conrade. Leonato welcomes them, and

Benedick and Beatrice begin their verbal sparring almost immediately. Don Pedro decides to stay with Leonato and his brother Antonio 'at the least a month' (1.1.110), setting up the context for the two love plots to develop.

Although Claudio liked Hero previously, he had 'a rougher task in hand' as a soldier (1.1.225); now he has nothing to distract him, he sees her as 'the sweetest lady I ever looked on (1.1.139). Benedick is disgusted by Claudio's 'intent to turn husband' (1.1.143), and declares that he himself will never marry. However, Claudio asks for Don Pedro's help in securing Hero's hand in marriage, and Don Pedro agrees to gain her affections during a grand party at Leonato's house that evening.

Meanwhile, Antonio tells Leonato that his servant overheard Don Pedro telling Claudio that he meant to woo Hero that evening. Leonato, not realising that Don Pedro is wooing on Claudio's behalf, tells Hero, so that she can be prepared for Don Pedro's proposal. Don John has also been told by Borachio of Don Pedro's plan to woo Hero on Claudio's behalf, and determines to thwart the marriage. Don John makes it clear that although he is apparently reconciled to Don Pedro, he is 'a plain-dealing villain' (1.3.23-24) and is looking for a way to break out from under Don Pedro's authority.

Act 2

Leonato and Antonio note that Don John was not present at supper, and Beatrice compares him to Benedick, finding them opposites but neither of them suitable as a husband: 'the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling' (2.1.7-8). Leonato comments that Beatrice's wit will prevent her from ever marrying, and she determines to remain single, in an echo of Benedick's earlier speeches about bachelorhood. Hero, however, must marry to suit her father's will. Leonato reminds Hero that if Don Pedro asks for her hand in marriage, she knows how she must answer.

The masked revellers arrive and dancing begins. Don Pedro pairs off with Hero, then Margaret with Balthasar, Leonato's musician, and Ursula with Antonio. Beatrice and Benedick then meet, although it is clear that she does not recognise him. She calls Benedick 'the prince's jester, a very dull fool' (2.1.103), which clearly upsets him as he reflects on it later in the scene, saying, 'I'll be revenged as I may' (2.1.159).

Don John and Borachio recognise Claudio, but pretend that they think he is Benedick, and tell him that Don Pedro has wooed Hero for himself and will marry her immediately. Claudio believes them, and when Benedick arrives to tell him 'the prince hath got your Hero' (2.1.146), Claudio says, 'I wish him joy of her' (2.1.147). Benedick tells Don Pedro of Claudio's misunderstanding,

and when Beatrice arrives with Claudio, Don Pedro tells him the truth and gives Hero to him, with Leonato's blessing.

Don Pedro questions Benedick over his quarrel with Beatrice during the dance, but Benedick insists that Beatrice was the one in the wrong. He leaves rather than spend any time with 'my Lady Tongue' (2.1.207-208), avoiding her harsh words. Don Pedro then offers to marry Beatrice himself, but she rejects him. After she leaves, Don Pedro comes up with the plan to trick Beatrice and Benedick into falling in love with each other, in the week leading up to Claudio and Hero's marriage, with the support of Leonato, Claudio and Hero.

Don John is frustrated that his original plan has been thwarted, but Borachio comes up with a new one. He suggests that Margaret, Hero's servant, would be willing to do anything for him. Don John should tell Don Pedro and Claudio that Hero is unfaithful, and then lead the men to Hero's window at night, where they will see Borachio with Margaret pretending to be Hero. This will be all the proof needed to prevent the marriage taking place.

Meanwhile, Benedick is alone in the orchard. He ponders how Claudio can have changed from a soldier into a lover, and wonders whether it could ever happen to him. He does not believe so, since a woman would have to be perfect before he could love her. Don Pedro, Leonato and Claudio arrive, knowing that Benedick is there, although Benedick hides from them. Don Pedro says that Beatrice is in love with Benedick, and Leonato confirms it, with Claudio adding further evidence from Hero. However, Beatrice would apparently rather die than let Benedick know of her love. When the men go in for dinner, Benedick comes out of hiding, clearly believing what he has overheard, and declares that he will marry after all. Beatrice is sent to fetch him for dinner, and although she is rude to him, he interprets her words as signs of love.

Act 3

Act 3 begins with Beatrice in hiding, as Hero, Margaret and Ursula discuss how Benedick is in love with Beatrice but will not tell her for fear of being rejected. They focus on how he 'goes foremost in report through Italy' (3.1.97) and is therefore highly suitable as a husband. Beatrice comes out of hiding after they have gone, horrified to hear how she is judged by them and determined to change, saying, 'Benedick, love on, I will requite thee' (3.1.111).

When Don Pedro and Claudio next see Benedick, he has shaved off his beard, and they conclude that 'he is in love' (3.2.47). Benedick asks to speak privately with Leonato, and while he is away, Don John comes to tell Claudio that Hero is unfaithful and that he should not marry her. Don John leads Don Pedro and Claudio away to show them the proof behind his accusation.

The Prince's Watch takes up its post, with a particular request from Dogberry, the constable, to 'watch about Signor Leonato's door' (3.3.75-76), since the wedding is tomorrow. As the watchmen are standing guard, they overhear Borachio boasting to Conrade of how he wooed Margaret in Hero's name so that Don Pedro and Claudio could see them. Borachio says that Claudio went away determined to shame her in front of everyone at the wedding the next day. The watch, led by Seacoal, detains Borachio and Conrade for 'the most dangerous piece of lechery, that ever was known in the commonwealth' (3.3.136-137). The characters in the watch introduce more physical comedy to the play, and Dogberry's speech is full of malapropisms which contrast comically with the courtly behaviour and witty repartee of the higher status characters in the play.

Hero and Margaret prepare for the wedding. When Beatrice arrives she is unwell, and Margaret teases her about Benedick. Ursula calls them in to go to church. Meanwhile, Dogberry and Verges, his second in command, tell Leonato that the watch has apprehended 'two aspitious persons' (3.5.36), and Leonato is required to examine them. However, Leonato is busy preparing for Hero's wedding and tells Dogberry to examine the men himself, thereby missing the evidence that would have prevented Don John's plot from coming to fruition.

Act 4

Act 4 begins with Claudio and Hero's wedding. As they stand before the Friar, Claudio accuses her of being unfaithful, saying that he himself has seen the evidence. Hero faints, and Claudio, Don Pedro and Don John leave, believing her to be dead. Leonato also believes the accusations, asking, 'would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie?' (4.1.145). However, Benedick has not gone with Don Pedro and Claudio, believing that there is something wrong with the accusation. Hero recovers, but the Friar counsels Leonato to say that she is really dead, until the reasons for the accusations can be revealed. Benedick admits that his loyalties should be with Don Pedro, but states that he wants to see justice done.

When the wedding party leaves to announce that Hero is dead, Benedick remains behind to comfort Beatrice, who has 'wept all this while' (4.1.248). He states, 'surely I do believe that your fair cousin is wronged' (4.1.252), and Beatrice longs for someone to 'right' Hero (4.1.253). Benedick then tells Beatrice that he loves her, and she admits that she also loves him. However, when she asks him to 'kill Claudio' in revenge (4.1.287), he is initially reluctant to fulfil her wishes, and takes further persuasion before he agrees to challenge Claudio to a duel.

The watchmen bring Borachio and Conrad before the Sexton to confess their crime. The watchmen tell what they overheard, and the Sexton recounts the events of the wedding, adding

that Don John has 'this morning secretly stolen away' (4.2.52). The Sexton orders that Borachio and Conrade be taken to Leonato's so that he can hear their confession.

Act 5

Leonato grieves for his daughter. Having initially raged at her for her infidelity, he now says, 'My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied' (5.1.42), and determines that he will make Claudio and Don Pedro believe this too. Leonato accuses Claudio of killing Hero with his slander, and challenges him to a duel. Antonio also challenges Claudio, but Don Pedro dismisses them, saying that Hero 'was charged with nothing but what was true, and very full of proof' (5.1.103-104). Benedick then challenges Claudio. He resigns from Don Pedro's service and announces that Don John has fled.

Dogberry arrives with Borachio and Conrade, and Don Pedro demands to know what they have done. Borachio confesses to Don Pedro, then the Sexton brings Leonato and Antonio to hear the confession as well. However, Leonato continues to blame Don Pedro, Claudio and Don John for Hero's death. Don Pedro and Claudio are remorseful, and ask what they can do to make amends. Leonato asks them to hold a vigil overnight at Hero's tomb, and then the following day to marry his brother's daughter. Leonato believes that Margaret was also involved in the plot, but Borachio absolves her of blame.

Benedick tries to write a poem for Beatrice, but cannot think of the rhymes he needs, so sends Margaret to fetch Beatrice herself. Beatrice uses her verbal wit to prevent Benedick from kissing her, but their relationship is clearly much more amicable, and Benedick states, 'Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably' (5.2.54). Ursula then comes to tell them that Don John's plot has been uncovered and Hero is proven to be innocent.

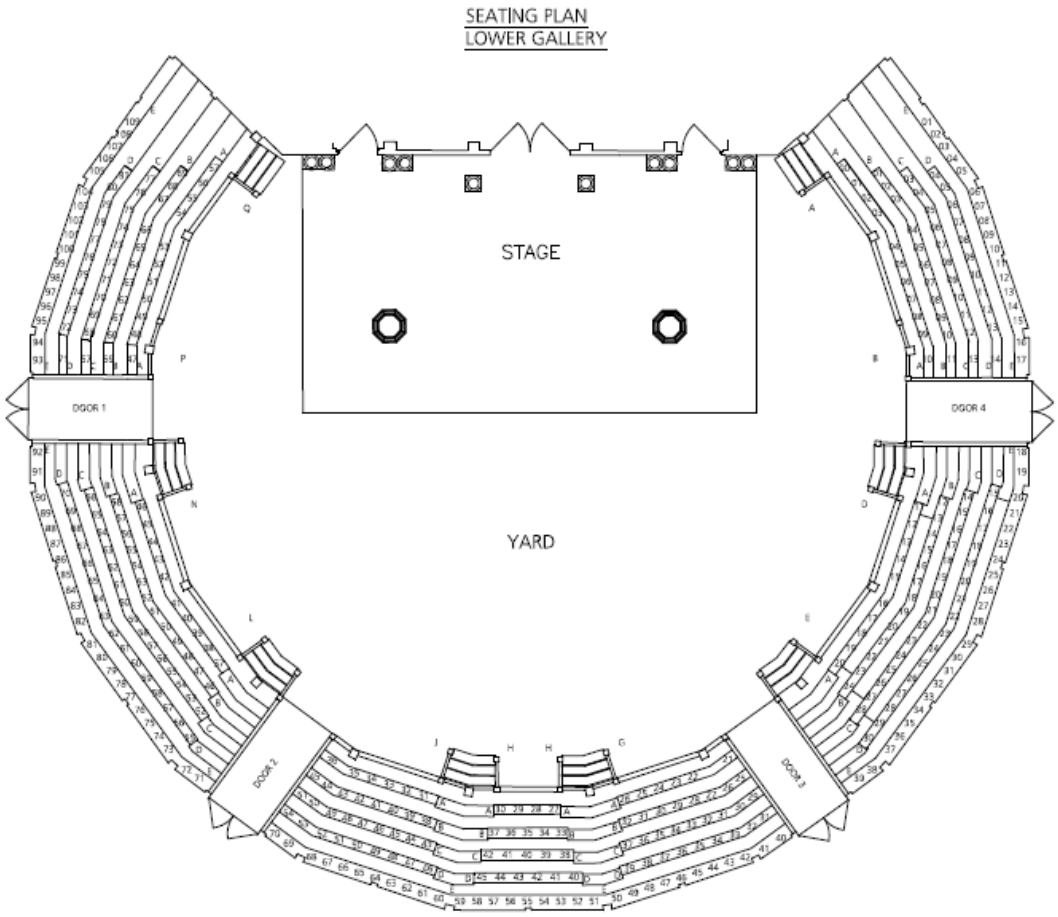
Claudio and Don Pedro hold their vigil at Hero's tomb, and they then go to Leonato's so that Claudio can marry Leonato's niece. Meanwhile, Benedick asks for Leonato's blessing on his marriage to Beatrice.

When Claudio arrives for his wedding, he is presented with a veiled woman, and is not allowed to see his bride before they are married. After they are united, his new wife reveals herself to be Hero, alive and well. Benedick asks Beatrice to unveil herself, and then asks her to publicly declare her love for him. She refuses, and Benedick accuses her of lying, saying that he heard it from Leonato, Don Pedro and Claudio. Beatrice then declares that Benedick also loves her, because she heard it from Hero, Margaret and Ursula. Leonato intervenes, and Claudio and Hero produce letters that Benedick and Beatrice have written, declaring their love for each other. Benedick and Beatrice agree to marry, and both couples celebrate together. A messenger arrives

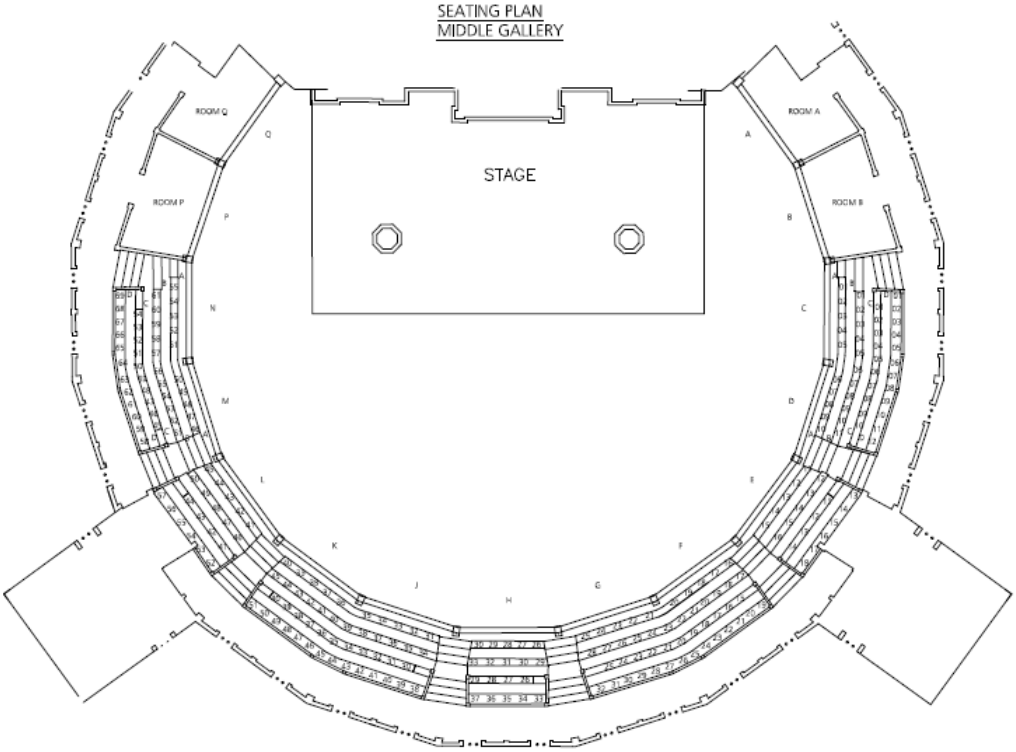
to tell Don Pedro that Don John has been recaptured, but Benedick tells him to ‘think not on him till tomorrow’ (5.4.121) as they dance to end the play.

10.7 APPENDIX VII: SEATING PLAN FOR SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

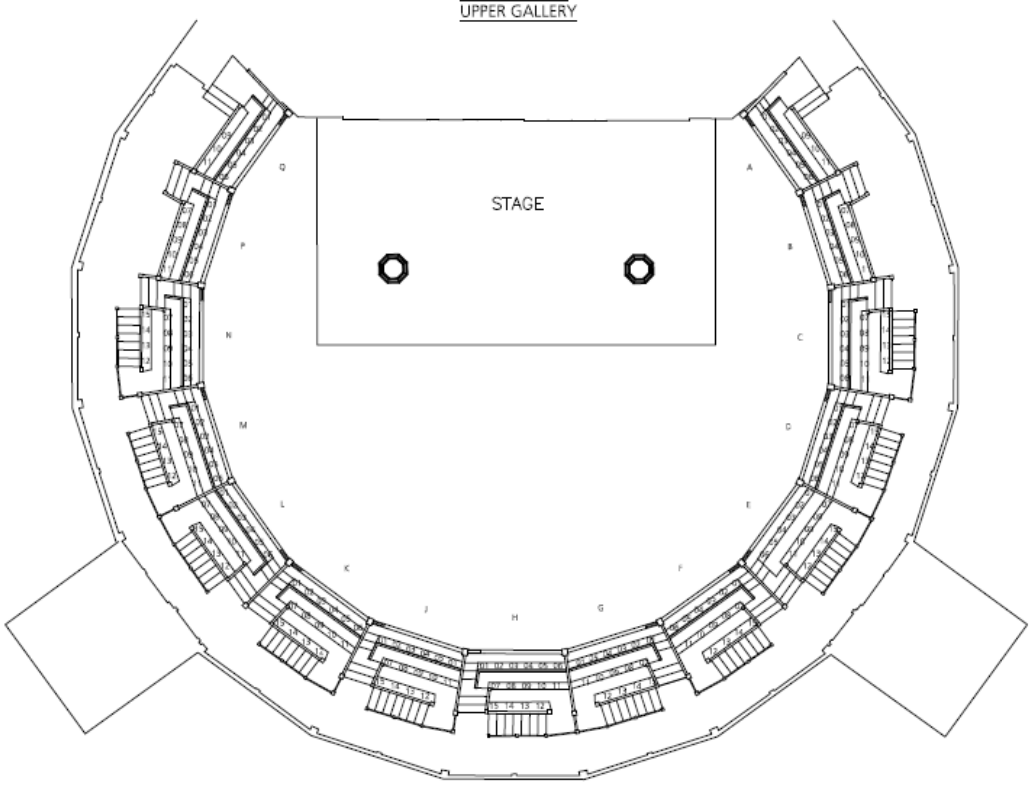
Seating plans ©The Shakespeare Globe Trust, used with permission.



SEATING PLAN
MIDDLE GALLERY



SEATING PLAN
UPPER GALLERY



10.8 APPENDIX VIII: EXTRACT: THEATRE OBSERVATION FIELD NOTES

DONNA JOAN
There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, therefore the sadness is without limit. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business, laugh when I am merry and claw no man in his humour.

BORACHIO
Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment, you have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace.

DONNA JOAN
I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain, I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog, therefore I have decreed, not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth, I would bite: if I had my liberty, I would do my liking.

BORACHIO
Can you make no use of your discontent? I came yonder from a great supper, the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato, and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

DONNA JOAN
Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BORACHIO
Marry it is your brother's right hand.

DONNA JOAN
Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO
Even he.

DONNA JOAN
A proper squire, and who, and who, which way looks he?

BORACHIO
Marry on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DONNA JOAN
A very forward March-chick!

BORACHIO
I heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

DONNA JOAN
This may prove food to my displeasure, that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way, you are sure, and will assist me?

BORACHIO
To the death my lady.

DONNA JOAN
Let us to the great supper.

SCENE 3
Enter LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE, and MARGARET

LEONATO
Was not Countess Joan here at supper?

MARGARET
I saw her not.

BEATRICE
How tartly that gentlewoman looks, I never can see her, but I am heart-burned an hour after.

HERO
She is of a very melancholy disposition.

BEATRICE
It were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between her and Benedick, the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like a lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

LEONATO
Then half Benedick's tongue in Joan's mouth, and half Joan's melancholy in Benedick's face -

BEATRICE
With a good leg, and a good foot uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a' could get her good-will.

LEONATO
By my troth niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

BEATRICE
For the which blessing, I am at ~~him~~ God upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face.

LEONATO
You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEATRICE
What should I do with him? He that hath a beard, is more than a youth: and he that hath no beard, is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth, is not for me: and he that is less than a man, I am not for him

LEONATO
Well niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

BEATRICE
Not till God make men of some other metal than earth, would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? No uncle, I'll none.

LEONATO
Daughter, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

BEATRICE
Yes faith, it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please you.': but yet for all that cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

MARGARET
The revellers are entering!

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, DONNA JOAN, and BORACHIO masked

DON PEDRO
Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO
So you walk softly, and look sweetly, I am yours for the walk.

DON PEDRO
Speak low if you speak love.

Drawing her aside

BORACHIO
Well, I would you did like me.

MARGARET
So would not I for your own sake, for I have many ill-qualities.

BORACHIO
Which is one?

MARGARET
I say my prayers aloud.

BORACHIO
I love you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.

MARGARET
God match me with a good dancer!

BORACHIO
Amen.

BEATRICE
Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENEDICK
No, you shall pardon me.

BEATRICE
That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales:' Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENEDICK
What's he?

BEATRICE
I am sure you know him well enough.

BENEDICK
Not I, believe me.

BEATRICE
Did he never make you laugh?

BENEDICK
I pray you what is he?

BEATRICE
Why he is the prince's jester, a very dull fool; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him.

BENEDICK
When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

BEATRICE
Do, do. We must follow the leaders.

Dance. Then exeunt all except DONNA JOAN, BORACHIO, and CLAUDIO

DONNA JOAN
Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: The ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

BORACHIO
And that is Claudio, I know him by his bearing.

DONNA JOAN
Are not you Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO
You know me well, I am he.

DONNA JOAN
Signior, you are very near my brother in his love, he is enamoured on Hero, I pray you dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

10.9 APPENDIX IX: TRANSCRIPTION SAMPLES

10.9.1 Appendix IX.i Questionnaire Transcript

Student A005

Q1Q1
I think of Romeo and Juliet because it is one of the most common plays by Shakespeare.

Q1Q2
Merchant of Venice

Q1Q3
Read from the text

Write about the play

Listen to the teacher

Discuss in small groups

Discuss as a class

Watch a DVD

Q1Q4

Q1Q4: Help:
Discuss in small groups, watch a DVD, Discuss as a class

Q1Q4: Don't Help:
Act out parts of the play, copy from the board, create models

Q1Q5
No.

Q1Q6
No.

Q1Q7
Old English accent being used. Words such as 'thou'.

Q1Q8
Yes

Q1Q9
No

Q1Q10

Q1Q11
I've noticed theres a moral to the majority or all of his plays

Q2Q1
I thought the building looked very old and unstable

Q2Q2
I knew nothing about it

Q2Q3
It did matter because I had no idea what was going on in the play

Q2Q4
No, because I have no interest in Shakespeare theatre

Q2Q5
I don't mind.

Q2Q6
I think it was unrealistic because phones did not exist in Shakespearean theatre.

Q2Q7
I'm not sure.

Q2Q8
It was relatable.

Q2Q9
No, I thought people were going to be dressed up in old Shakespearan clothes – not modern superheroes.

Q2Q10
NO

Q2Q11
It was ok at times.

Q2Q12
It will only give me an idea of what the Globe looked like.

Q2Q13
Yes, because the film is a lot more professional

Q2Q14
No, because I'm not interested in Shakespeare, therefore it would be a waste of money.

10.9.2 Appendix IX.ii Extract from an Interview Transcript

Extract from Henslowe Academy Group 2 Interview 1:

CB:
Okay are you all in the same English class or are you all in different classes

Donny:
in different classes

CB:
You're all different classes so how does that compare with what you do then

Donny:
Uh we do a similar thing in general lessons we'll just read some of the book and analyse it

CB:
Mmhmm

Donny:
and understand the deeper meaning and at the first lesson we do the same thing have relationships uh sheets

CB:
so before you start reading a play you know who the characters are

Donny:
yeah

CB:
you know how they fit together

Donny:
Roughly roughly yeah

Mo:
yeah

CB:
okay and is that what you did when you started

Donny:
Yeah

CB:
Doing Much Ado yeah so you know who all the characters are before you go tomorrow

Akinfenwa:
yeah

Donny:
Yeah we know them

CB:
How about you?

Mo:
Yeah we have a sheet with all the names and then the pictures and then we get like extracts from the play like act one scene one and we put it into modern English

CB:
Right mmhmm

Mo:
So we understand what they're saying and then we watch the whole movie uh so that we can like visualise the characters and like see how they presented themselves and then um like when we watch the play ourselves

CB:
Mmhmm do you think there's a problem with watching the movie first

Mo:
Yeah because the the characters are like represented differently in the movies and in the book

CB:
Mmhmm yeah

Mo:
in the play um and uh they change some of the words to make it yeah more understandable in the in the play in the film

CB:
Yeah so why do you think that teachers like showing movies

Mo:
Er cause you can like visually um think about how the characters would look

CB:
Mmhmm

Mo:
Uh and th and people enjoy watching the movie more in our class

CB:
Yeah

Mo:
Yeah

CB:
So does that feel like a lesson off then

Akinfenwa:
I think the teachers don't want any work to be honest I think they'll happily sit there and do nothing for a lesson

Donny:
it gives us a good understanding of the play though I think it's quite good

Mo:
yeah

CB:
yeah yeah

Donny:
because otherwise we wouldn't understand if we just read Shakespeare's play in all his old English

CB:
Mmhmm

Donny:
so it's a lot easier when we we uh watch the movie

Akinfenwa:
and actually hear them say it

Donny:
yeah